WITT againſt *WISDOM.*

OR A

PANEGYRICK

UPON

FOLLY:

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1871
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Penn'd in *Latin* by

DESIDERIUS ERASMUS,

Render'd into *Engliſh.*

—*Sæpe jocum veſtri movêre tumultus*

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TO THE READER.

THat there cannot be two more fortunate properties, than *to have a little of the Fool, and not too much of the Knave*, was an obſervation of Him, who (if the *Servant*'s extortion reflect not on the *Maſter*'s integrity, or judgment) was neither of Both; the learned Lord *Bacon*. What that collecting Politician did coyly remark, is here in a greater advance more poſitively made good, namely, That not only *Fortune*, but, what is more comprehenſive, *Happineſs* in all reſpects, does devoutly attend ſuch, as whom either Nature, or Diſtemper hath firſt moulded, or afterward corrupted into *Fools*, and *Madmen*. And certainly if the Abſence of Grief, the Reprieve from Care, the Unrelenting at Diſappointments, and ſuch like well eſteem'd Accidents, do any way pertain to (as perhaps in the Philoſophy of bare Nature they wholly make up) the *Notion* of *Happineſs*,

the eaſie Reſult of each man's Experience, as well as the Induction of the following Particulars, will abundantly convince, That alway Anxiety, and Forecaſt, and not ſeldom Diſcontent, and Regret, being Handmaids to the *Wiſe*, while an immoveable complacency is a conſtant Gueſt to the Fool, this *laſt* is as much more happy, as he is leſs harraſs'd, leſs perplex'd, leſs ſollicitous, than the *other*. Beſide, if (what was formerly probable, and is of late ingeniouſly attempted to be improved to an higher degree of credibility) a *Reality* of Happineſs during the Conceit equally reſults from an *Imaginary*, as a *Real* Object, and what's Aiery and Phantaſtick in the *Apprehenſion*, may be firm, and ſolid in the *Fruition*; I ſee no great reaſon, why a Fool's Bliſs ſhould not, without a figure, be a *Paradiſe* in the propriety of the word, ſince it is a State, wherein neither Deſire outſtrips Enjoyment, nor Fear of Deprivation damps the comfort of a preſent Poſſeſſion.

But after All, there is a wide difference betwixt what is ſtrictly *True*, and what's finely *Plauſible*; and therefore how ſmoothly ſoever it may ſound, That the being poſſeſs'd of all we do but ſuppoſe *Good*, is the

the commencing all we can imagine *Happy*, (which by the by were it unconditionately granted, would infer, that the degenerating into *Brutes*, was an approach to the becoming *Gods*) yet it is undeniably experienced, that this Happiness of Fools will never be made so much the *Opinion* of *Others*, as it is the *Faith* of *Themselves*. This Paradox therefore, we may well presume, was not the sole aim of the Author, who from principles of Self-interest was obliged not to be in earnest, when he declaims against his own accomplishments of Wit, Learning, and Wisdom, and at the same time attributes the most attainable Perfection to what he himself was at the greatest distance from, Dotage, and Folly. He might perhaps, like the *copious Orator*, give the world an hint, That that any time he appear'd Patron on the juster side of any controversie, men of Morals and Conscience were beholden to him for his choice of Argument, since he could polish the roughest *Paradox* with as much ease, and success, as he could illustrate the most received *Truth*; and with the subtilizing *Chrysippus* should sooner want *Opinions* to set abroach, than upon the taking up any *Opinion* want arguments to *defend* it. But o-

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therwiſe it is apparent, that (like perſons of ſquinting Opticks, who role their Eyes one way, and yet direct their Looks another) our Author, Archer like, ſhoots juſt contrary from where he pretends to aime, and makes a compleat *Satyr* againſt Fools, of what he entitles a *Panegyrick* upon Folly. Under this Covert he levels more ſecurely, wounds more inoffenſively, and leaves room for a ſafer retreat, than if he had fell too bluntly on, and made an open *Aſſault* inſtead of an ambuſcading *ſurpriſe*. And indeed the Palate of each mans *Judgment*, being the ſame with that of his *Taſte*, is clogg'd, and nauſeated with what's ſweet, and luſcious, and repaired only by the whetting Particles of ſharp, and corroding, yet again a too biting Reproof, without ſome intermixture of Wheedle, ſeldom making Converts of thoſe it is applied to; Subjects of this nature are certainly then beſt handled, when the perſons to be reflected on are in the ſame Periods *laugh'd* out of their miſtakes, and yet *flattered* into amendment. By this Artifice, in the following Tract, all the Scandals, Corruptions, groſſer Abſurdities, or more trivial failures of a crazy world, are expoſed with as equal a doſe of

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Insinuation, and Sarcasme, as either the oyliness of a *Sycophant* could on the one hand *suggest*, or the gall of a *Poet* on the other *express*. As he spared no one degree of Age, Sex, or Professions, out of cowardice, or partiality; so, to be most *corrosive*, where the sore was most *cankrous*, he is less niggardly of his taunts, and strictures, upon the botches and excrescencies of the *Roman Church*, whose Marts of Indulgence, Trinkets of Superstition, Blindness of the Laity, Impostures of the Priest, and most other appendages of cheat, and delusion, are so boldly ript up, and smartly animadverted on, as no confidence could have *outbraved*, nor any the highest reach of wit can ever *go beyond*. Upon which account Part of the Subject being so fashionably grateful, I presume the whole *Translation* may be the more welcome; especially since several Dialogues of the same Author have been acceptably *done into English*, to represent the *LEVITIES* crept into the Church of *Rome*, by a *Person* that, maugre the reproach of malice, is no doubt as sincere a Professor of *Protestant Religion*, as he is a zealous Patriot of *Christian Loyalty*, and (if Circumstances rendred it more necessary) could as freely expose

pose the impostures of *Popery*, as he does daily in unanswerable Papers discover the Impudence, and Hypocrisie of a *Phanatick Faction*: a Faction that has been the *scandal* of Christianity, and the meer *Burlesque* of Protestantisme; that has forfeited an *Indulgence*, out-dared an *oblivion*, and so long bid defiance to Mercy, as well as Justice, till the Capital *Punishments* of *Treason* must discharge the lesser *Penalties* of *schism*.

But this is certain, the Papal Policy, which demands so straight-lac'd a submission from all her members, would never have suffered *Erasmus* to have took so unbridled a range in the reproof and censures of her Extravagancies, if he had not nick'd the opportunity of doing it at such a time, and under such circumstances, as when the more profess'd attaque of *Luther*, and his Adherents in *Germany*, impos'd on her a prudential necessity of not disobliging her *friends*, that she might have an undisturbed leisure, and more united strength to oppose the *common Enemy*; so that under that Juncture she was forc'd patiently to put up what at any other season she would have heinously resented: As Princes, engaged in a hazardous war, are oblig'd to connive at some little

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Encroachments from their Subjects, or *Provocations* from their Allies, which in a more ſettled poſture they would ſcorn to bear, or comply with. Thus (as the *Reaſons* of each are *parallel*, though the *Caſes* be as widely *different*, as the Confidence of ſpeaking *Truth*, and the Impudence of a *Lie*) our Government can now find courage enough to ſentence, and ſuppreſs ſuch treaſonable, and ſeditious *Libels*, which not ſo long ſince perk't up with undaunted foreheads, and ſtared even Majeſty it ſelf out of countenance.

Yet however our Author was not queſtioned by publick Authority, we are ſure that he hereby gall'd, and chafed ſeveral, not only of his profeſſion in general, but of his more intimate friends, and acquaintance; among which his *beloved Dorpius* (with whom he had contracted as near a familiarity, as perſonal conference, and frequent correſpondence, could either occaſion, or improve) was ſo nettled at the firſt appearance of this Tract, that he ſends him a rattling *Reproof*; to which, though *Eraſmus* ſubjoyned a very reconciling *Reply*, yet we have good grounds to preſume, that they were never afterwards cordially *Friends*.

And *Liſter*, who in *Eraſmus* his life-time republiſhed this Treatiſe with his own *Notes*, or *Commentaries*, undertook this task, not ſo much out of *reſpect* to his friend the Author, or *care* for the promotion of Learning, as he did to *ſalve* and *palliate* the ſeveral reflexions upon the then faſhionable Religion, as will appear to any indifferent obſerver, who cannot but ſee that the obſcurities, and difficulties of the *Text* (which perhaps are too few, and mean, to need any explication) are but ſlightly toucht at, while great pains and caution is imployed in either *perverting*, or at leaſt *mollifying* thoſe paſſages, which lay too heavy a hand upon any of their hallowed corruptions. Nay the whole Catholick party were ſo incenſed at his liberty of Reflecting, that though for the fore-hinted inducements they did not by any formal *Interdict* ſend him in perſon to the *Devil* while *alive*, yet ſince his *death* they have diſpatcht him half way to *Hell* in *Effigie*, and few of their late Hiſtorians do any where occaſionally mention him without ſome little *wiping character*, as it were eaſie to find materials for inſtances in ſeveral particulars. Yet (what was ſure to be the conſequence, and indeed

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was but just) he impaired his esteem with the *Romanists* at no faster a rate than he advanced his reputation with the *Reformed*, especially here in *England*, where a *Translation* of his *Paraphrase on the New Testament* was in the first of *Edward* the Sixth ordered to be placed in all Parish Churches, and in some of them to this day remains: The method whereof is very profitable, and the stile both easie, and eloquent; yet on some Texts there is imposed but an harsh Interpretation, as I am in one particular more especially engaged to take notice, because the same sense is given of the same passage toward the latter end of this following piece, where animadverting upon the disingenuity of Commentators, he singles out *Franciscus de Lyrâ*, who treating on that Text of St. *Luke*, *c.* 22. *v.* 36. [*He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.*] had without much impropriety taken the whole *literally*, though indeed with a very extravagant Inference for the Legitimacy of Private *Defence* in case of *Persecution*. Our Author might reasonably arraign this Deduction of a dangerous Influence; but not content with this, he proceeds, and as well here, as in his Paraphrase maintains, That

the Sentence is ſuch a ſort of Metaphor, as by the *Sword* muſt be underſtood that only of the *Spirit*. It is true, a great many Commentators interpret the ſenſe Figuratively, yet ſo, as the word *Sword* ſhall be taken for neither *Material*, nor *Spiritual*, but only denote the foretelling of Perſecution, and caution the providing for Tribulation, and Martyrdom. Yet ſome other *Expoſitors* do with more of *Naturalneſs*, and perhaps not leſs of *Truth* apprehend the words *literally*, and conclude, That our Saviour hereby authoriſed his Diſciples to be furniſhed with weapons for ſecurity againſt the aſſaults of *private Robbers*, who at that time *Joſephus* obſerves were very numerous: Theſe ſame Arms, which might be employed for the preventing *private* Pillage, or Aſſaſſination, were to be laid down on all other the moſt urging provocations at the feet of *Publick* Authority; of which when there appear'd but a bare face, our Lord commands *Peter* to ſheath his ſword, and threatens, that whoever upon any ſuch occaſion did hereafter *take it*, ſhould *periſh by it*. This may perhaps be thought too *ſerious*, and (as ſo) impertinent for the introducing ſo light and Comical an Argument: But it ought to be

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ſuppoſed proper enough, ſince it has an immediate relation to a paſſage in the following Diſcourſe, wherein with ſubmiſſion I preſume the Author was a little too bold in his Comment, and in ſome meaſure incurs the ſame guilt himſelf, which he ſo ſmartly upbraided in others. His miſunderſtanding of which may however be the more meriting an excuſe, becauſe it may well be ſuppoſed to have been occaſioned by an honeſt deſign of promoting Unity, Peace, and Charity, in the obviating that pretence, which was by ſome drawn from this very Text of propagating Chriſtianity by all the moſt enforcing methods of Torture, War, and Slaughter; as if the *teaching of Nations* were to be accompanied with the *Baptizing* them in Blood, and Converts muſt have their own *wounds* to *bleed*, before they could become ſenſible of the benefits of a *wounded*, and *bleeding Saviour*.

There needs no Excuſe for any other Failure through the following Diſcourſe; ſo that to remove the *guard* to that place, which the *enemy* may find eaſieſt to *attaque*, I muſt divert the Apology for the *Author*, to one more requiſite, for the *Tranſlator*. Againſt whom (beſide all other piques, and exceptions)

tions) there will no queſtion be pointed this thruſting Objection, namely, That this ſame Piece of Wits Pageantry has been twice already cloath'd in our Mother-tongue, ſo that the *Republiſhing* at leaſt of one of theſe Tranſlations might have ſuperſeded the trouble of a *new one*. It may, I hope, be no ſcandal to confeſs, That till after my firſt Onſet, I had neither by Sight, nor Report, gathered any intimation of the fore-ſtalement herein; of which I were yet the leſs inquiſitive, becauſe the Perſon, who impoſed on me the Undertaking, took the Negative for granted, though he ſtood in better circumſtances of being informed, and was more concerned in the conſequence. But allowing the worſt, *Re-tranſlations* of late have been ſo ſucceſſively performed, ſo much to the *ſervice* of the *preſent* times, and *juſtice* to the *firſt* Authors, that Attempts of like nature can be no longer invidious, if they are grounded on the ſame Inducements, and do anſwer the ſame End, and Deſign. How far I can ſquare my Apology by this Rule, will in part appear by this following Obſervation: *Originals* of one language are differently to be rendred into another, according to their reſpective Matter,

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and Subject; In an argument of *History*, but more especially of *Physicks*, and *Mathematicks*, so much depends on the critical genuine sense of the Author, that there can be no latitude, or deviation allowed, but a *harsh cadence* is far more preferable, than a *bold*, though *tunable*, *variation*: whereas on the contrary, in *Poesie*, *Oratory*, *Panegyrick*, *Satyr*, or such like loser subjects, the excellency resulting rather from the Stile, and Fancy in general, than from the strictness of particular Periods: There may, nay there must, be some such judgment of discretion tolerated, as shall within due bounds new marshal the words, and in some measure plaister over the abruptness, and incoherence of sense. Accordingly the design of Translations seems then best answered, when the respective Renderers square their Attempts by the foregoing Rules, the same Liberty being an unpardonable *extravagance* in the one, which is no worse than a becoming *freedom* in the other: As the Painter, who is imployed to draw a Face to the Life, must confine his Pencil to an exact Transcript of the natural strokes, without any room to Fancy, or Flattery, limning even *Venus* her self with a *blemishing Mole*; whereas in the copying

copying after a *Landskip*, or other flourishing Draught, both Colours, and other Features for the lustre of Prospect may be so far altered, as the Judgment of the Artist shall with Liberty recommend. The Result of This, it is my Interest to have thus understood. Our Language hath been so much polish'd, and refin'd, since the first appearance of this Declamation in *English*, * that had it fallen into my hands e're I entred on this work, the perusal of it would have scarcely discourag'd me from pursuing the undertaking: For to have adventured abroad a second Edition of this antiquated Version, would doubtless have been interpreted as a design rather of exercising the Reader in the unpleasant task of laboriously picking out the meaning of obsolete words, and expressions, than of fairly leading him into the true and genuine sense of the Original; although what is here asserted might be easily made out beyond all possibility of exception, yet the learned Author acquitted himself so very well herein, that he comes fully up even to the most commendable way of writing, which obtain'd in his time. The modern Transla-

* *Done by Sir* Thomas Chaloner, *and printed at* London, 1549, in 4°.

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tor (to whom I intended the rule, but now laid down, to be chiefly applied) tied himself so strictly to a literal observance of the *Latin*, that to a bare English Reader, unacquainted with allusions to the eloquence of the *Latin* tongue, his Version is sometimes puzling, and obscure, at least never so smooth, and voluble, as the gaiety of the Argument would better have dispens'd with; whereas in this *Rehearsal* of mine, I have (more I confess to my own ease, and more gratefully, I question not, to the palate of others) allowed my self such elbow-room of expression, as the humoursomness of the Subject, and the Idiom of each language did *invite*, if not *command*. Yet I would not have it thereby suspected, that I have taken a straying Frisque, or Jant, beyond the limits of a just *decorum*; no, I have been so *free*, I hope, as not to be *licentious*, so *bold*, as not to be *immodest*: I considered, that rambling variations, as well as *verbatim* constructions, are both the scandalous Tasks of *School-boys*; therefore I so far consulted the avoiding each extreme, that I have this *disjunctive Plea* to bag the men of *Teeth* with, Wherever the *Latin* appears to have been seemingly injured, and receded from, there I doubted a

too close adherence would have been rough, and jarring: Again, where the *English* wants any thing of cadence, or coherence, there I check'd my range, and was afraid of treading too wide from the footsteps of the Original. For that the same Harangue, completely eloquent in one tongue, would be less winning, and persuasive, when close interpreted in another, is as obvious, as that *Travellers*, if they adapt not their garb to the mode of the country they reside in, are rather an object to *stare*, and *gaze* at, than to *bow* to, *reverence*, or be any way *respected*. The Reason on which this is grounded, being a *Propriety* in each language to peculiar Tropes, Figures, Phrases, &c. is so known a Topick, that to them who understand the original *Latin* it is wholly *superfluous*, and to those that do not, it is altogether as *needless*.

TO

To the AUTHOR *upon this Tranſlation.*

I've thought, *Sir*, hitherto without ſucceſs,
On the Expedients for Happineſs:
This to deſire by nature we're inclin'd
Which we in our reſearches ſeldom find.
It doth, like Beauty, in the Fancy lie,
As 'tis agreeable to the Lover's eye;
Cameleon-like from all things takes a die.
One thinks it doth conſiſt in ſanguine mirth,
When the Debauch to Wit muſt give a birth:
Another's happy if *Corinna*'s kind,
The Wiſe man calls it Indolence of mind:
The Miſer to them all prefers his Wealth,
The Jolly liver ſays tis florid health:
But theſe miſtaken wretches go aſtray,
Thy Author only hath found out the way;
Like to phantaſtick Chymiſts they preſume,
Till all their Projects break away in fume;
To ſearch the ſecret out they vainly try,
For after all, it doth in Folly lie;

This, 'cauſe 'tis innocent, is the beſt eſtate,
Which with reſiſtance blunts the edge of fate;
Him with a Genius Nature doth inſpire,
Which others by Philoſophy acquire;
All things content a Fool, and nothing cloys,
Which they define the heigth of humane joys;
He driveling on the Shore ſecure can be,
And view unmov'd the tempeſts of the Sea:
No formidable News doth him alarm,
He is in peace, tho' all the world doth arm;
'Gainſt all misfortunes hath a ſure defence,
His skull's impregnable with want of ſenſe;
His paſſions quiet, and his mind ſedate,
Nothing provokes his Envy, or his Hate:
He unconcern'd can ſtand with laughing eyes,
And ſee Unworthy men to Honor riſe;
Fortune a ſordid piece of Earth refines,
And from a Dunghil drawn the Meteor ſhines:
Then none the upſtart inſolence can indure,
Whoſe Soul is narrow, and his Birth obſcure;
Under the maſque a Furie's face doth ſhow,
Tho' for the Conſulate He bowed low;
His Will without his Reaſon doth command;
Thunder's too weighty for a vulgar hand:

Then he is freed from books laborious toil,
He doth not ſpend his Time, nor waſte his Oyl,
Impair his colour, and conſume his ſtrength,
Then grow too ſubtle for himſelf at length;
Before h' hath travell'd half the way he's dead,
The very fineneſs of it breaks the thread.
The *Turks* allow an Idiot a Shrine,
They think in Folly ſomething is Divine;
His Actions ſtill an equal tenor keep,
No frightful Images afflict his ſleep;
His Guardian-Angel then the care doth take,
His Innocence preſerves him when awake;
This great advantage he is happy in,
He wants a brisk capacity to ſin;
Sometimes a Vice he blunders on by chance,
But all his faults are thoſe of ignorance;
Beſides, a Changeling is no Hypocrite,
For what he is he ſhews you at firſt ſight;
Whilſt others do their Native ſelves diſguiſe
With nauſeous pretence of being Wiſe;
Of Criticks they aſſume the ſurly ſtate,
And cenſure thoſe they cannot imitate;
Like bladders only they of wind are full,
And hide with gravity their being dull;

Tho'

Tho' they with ſcorn the world do Ridicule,
Yet the Affected Wiſe one is the Fool.
But my Digreſſion returns to You,
To give that character which is your due;
And it impartially I can beſtow,
The Author by his work I only know;
So that if what I find I muſt commend,
'Tis done without being byaſs'd as his Friend.
'Tis not your *Pride, your Folly, or your Fate,
That makes you chooſe *Eraſmus* to tranſlate.
If with ſuch Verſions you the world delight,
You can oblige it equally, and write;
And here you have as much of judgment ſhown,
As if it had entirely been your own.
This way of writing once was thought a vice,
But now the touches of it are ſo nice,
That who this elegant Province would adorn,
Not Made, but he on purpoſe muſt be Born.
Some ſpoil all Subjects that they write upon,
As Ladies dawb a good complexion:
So High-way Beggers others children hire,
With ruddy looks, and all their limbs entire,
But they induſtriouſly are Cripples made,

* *Denham.*

For

For to promote the canting Gypſies trade.
Things that are delicate foul hands will ſtain,
But from yours always they do luſtre gain.
The *French* have luckily on this ſubject fell,
(The only thing they ever yet did well,)
Ingenuous *D' Ablancourt* ſhall lead the Van,
With his ſmart Dialogues of *Lucian*;
Him copyed by a skilful hand we ſee
An Ancient Droll in Modern Raillery:
A double honour to *Boyleau* is due,
Who is a Writer, and Tranſlator too;
He choſe the nobleſt Author of his time,
Like his *Longinus* ὑψος is ſublime:
Then *Vaugelas* did mighty pains beſtow
On *Curtius*, but He always was too ſlow;
His Heroe in leſs time had *Aſia* got,
He conquer'd faſter than this *Frenchman* wrote:
But ſtill their natural vanity is ſuch,
In this, and all things elſe they do too much:
They with ſuperfluous branches kill the root,
And make their Muſe a Suburb Proſtitute;
For what at firſt was cautiouſly incloſ'd.
Like to the common way is now expos'd.
Every Coquette can now her Author quote,

And

And like her Paraquettoe talk by rote:
Their Wit is like their Converſation, ſlight,
The *Engliſh* with a Manly vigor write:
If they at any time with labour ſtrain,
The greatneſs of the birth doth cauſe the pain;
With joynts robuſtly knit the Infant grows,
And ſo makes compenſation for the throwes.
By reading your Tranſlation we can tell,
How much in their own way we them excell.
Our Learned *Athens* lately hath brought forth
Men hardly to be equall'd for their worth.
Lucretius firſt in Engliſh did appear,
(But you, Sir, worſhip Muſes leſs ſevere)
That work is now unto perfection brought,
Which all men dreaded in the very thought;
Our fruitful Mother hath herſelf out-done
In teemiug with ſo excellent a Son;
Of ours the admiration doth engage,
And the applauſes of the future Age;
You with the ſoftneſs of your Art beguile,
And teach the rigid *Stoick* how to ſmile:
You hit the humor of the Book ſo true,
That Comical *Eraſmus* breaths in You;
We ſee the ſpirit of the Author ſhine

In every Page, in every pleaſant Line,
The Stile's ſo clear, ſo Admirably fine.
What Fruits will not your Age maturely bring,
So fertile, if ſo early is your Spring?
The riſing Sun ſets forth a previous Ray,
Engaging to ſhine brightly all the day.
Your Talents, Sir, do make you juſtly fit
For to tranſlate this noble piece of Wit,
Who have your ſelf ſo great a ſhare of it.

M. MORGAN.

To his ingenious Friend on his excellent Translation of MORIÆ ENCOMIUM.

There's ne're a Blade *of honour in the Town,*
But if you chance to term him Fool, *or Clown,*
Straight Satisfaction *cryes, and then with speed*
The Time, the Place, and Rapier's length's decreed.
Prodigious Fops, I'le swear, which can't agree
To be call'd what's their Happiness to be:
Blest Ideots!
That in an humble sphere securely move,
And there the sweets of a safe dulness *prove,*
Nor envy the proud heights of those who range
Folly, *sure Friend of a misguided Will,* (above.
Affords a kind Excuse for doing Ill;
And to the peaceful breast, wherein she lives,
A free, and a true gust of pleasure gives:
Whil'st Wisdom's *Patron with* discreet *allay*
Pall's his delights, and deadens all his joy:
Than this nought more does evidence the love,
Or more ensur's the care of Powers above:
Heaven still bestows on those it does despise,

The

The creditable plague of being Wise:
And Socrates, *that prudent, thinking tool,*
Had the Gods lik'd him, need have prov'd a Fool.
My thinks our Author, *when without a flaw,*
The graces of his Mistress he does draw,
Wishes (if Metempsuchosis *be true,*
And souls do change their case, and act anew)
In his next life he only might aspire
To the few brains of some soft Country Squire,
Whose head with such like rudiments is fraught,
As in his youth his careful Grannum taught.
And now (dear Friend) how shall we to thy brow
Pay all those Laurels which we justly owe?
For thou fresh honors to the Work do'st bring,
And to the Theme: nor seems that pleasing thing,
Which he so well in Latin *has expres's't,*
Less Comical in English *garments dres's't;*
Thy Sentences are all so clearly wrought,
And so exactly plac'd is e'ry thought,
That, which is more oblig'd, we scarce can see
The Subject by thine Author, or Himself by Thee.

In the perſon of FOLLY.

DIſtance! Away, you ſullen, ſheepiſh ſouls,
Whoſe broody thoughts ſit always hatching Rules!
You Tub-Philoſophers, whoſe croaking brains
Make Earth as Helliſh as the *Stygian* Plains;
Your uncouth, louring Grimaces become
Your moody Muſings on your ſelves at home.
But no Infernal viſage muſt be ſeen,
Where all are to be jolly by deſign.
Vail then, or vaniſh, die, or diſappear,
And leave us Fools to our Careſſes here.

My thundring Mandates having purg'd the air,
The Gods conſenting, and the paſſage clear,
I thus attempt my grandieur to extoll,
Acting my own Encomiaſt in a Droll:
I'le make deſcriptive Gloſſes on a Straw,
And cant the world to a Tarantula.

Thus, long-bleſs'd herd, have I with patience (ſeen
Minerva's Scepter taking place of mine;

That

That curs't *Virago*, whose officious Spies
Have watch't you out of all your Libraries:
Her School-Devotes a base degenerous brood,
Like waspish Insects swarm, and buz abroad:
These with unruly Insolence have made
Injurious inroads on those Rights I had;
They fetter Souls with magisteriall rage,
And lecture Free-men into Vassallage;
Nay, by the circumventions of Dispute
They'l prove my Chastity a Prostitute.
Thus overgrown in Sophistry, and Pride,
They're Kings themselves, but make all Slaves beside.
And shall these Rebels thus usurp it on?
No, their dogmatick Tyranny shall down:
Instead of Problems, Schemes, Compendiums,
Those Execution-Engines of the Schools, (Rules,
I, with my Pictures, Puppets, Dwarfs, and Apes,
Masques, Mermaids, Interludes, and Antique shapes,
Will mount the Stage, ridiculously fine,
In all the colours of an *Indian* Queen,
Which Magazine of Rarities presents,
A Gallimaufry of Divertisements;
For beautified by Art, or Nature's dress,

They

They all enamour by their Prettineſs,
While the admiring croud with captive eyes,
Do proſelyte themſelves to Votaries.

In early days, when men, unus'd to Rules,
Commenc'd by natural Inſtalment Fools,
When ſacred Ignorance it's Umbrage ſpread,
And all ſate cool, and quiet in the ſhade,
So long the Province of my Reign did know
No other bounds than Earth, and Heaven, do.
But when the world grew light, and hot as Noon,
And Dog-ſtar wit made all a Torrid Zone;
Then Queſtioniſts aroſe, men who would know,
Why things were thus, and thus, and why not ſo;
Theſe pert, and reſtleſs, ſtarted Scruples ſtill,
Painful to ſtate, but worſe to reconcile,
Yet well reſolv'd by one diſdainful ſmile;
Which hot-brain'd tribe, uneaſie, and moroſe,
Made all the world an Inquiſition-houſe.

But now my Crown ſhall be reſtor'd anew,
And falſe Pretenders ſhall confeſs the true,
Their long uſurp't Dominion ſhall decline,
And die into th' eſtabliſhment of mine.

Now

Now let the world keep Halcion, and careſs
In endleſs circles of unſtinted bliſs;
Let univerſal raviſhments increaſe
Your Joys beyond Deſcription, or Degrees:
Don't baulk your humours, leſt for want of vent
Your ſpirits ſtagnate into ſediment;
But frolick on, without conſulting Fate,
Till your looſe ſhattering ſouls evaporate.
Each Individual Votary ſhall ſhare
Repeated pledges of my conſtant care:
A balmy Miſt of *Lethe*-dews ſhall fall
In cool refreſhing Opiates on all,
As Lands of Spices, in a fragrant air,
Diſperſe, and ſcatter their perfumes afar:
With equal Frankneſs, and with greater Love,
Will I ſhowr down my Bleſſings from above:
That peaceful days may ſtill my Reign await,
I'le give the God of War an Opiate.
Your ſtarch't Punctilio Bravoes can't conclude
A private quarrel, but with loſs of bloud;
But my kind Fools are naturally ſtrange
To all the means, and miſchief of Revenge,
And thus i'le lay all Diſcords, that ariſe
From being really, or reputed Wiſe.

Let not the jolly Heir, who revels on,
Unravelling all his Fathers thrift had ſpun,
Turn Saint, for fear of ſome reſtrictive ties,
Or, that penurious Project, Legacies,
Ile keep the Sire ſo doting, he ſhall ne're
Impoveriſh this, or choſe another Heir.
Thus with a Princely care will I contrive
To guard your Rights, and my Prerogative.
The peeviſh Cynick, in a whining ſtrain,
Will ſtrive to preach Tub-learning up again,
And prove that none but Anchorites are Men.
But now you'l ſcorn their Philoſophick rants,
And laugh their Reaſonings out of countenance;
You'l ſee the fruit, and influence of Books,
And ne're deſire to b' aggrandiz'd to ſtocks.
Admoniſh'd thus, and repoſſeſs't anew
Of Freedom, Peace, and my Protection too,
Career it on with an advancing haſt,
Let one days Joy exceed all Ages paſt;
With Frolicks drain your ſouls of all their Earth,
N'ere think but Laugh, and breath no Ayre but Mirth.
And now Farewell, I muſt with ſpeed away,
The buckſome Gods keep Jubilee to day,

And all their Jollity will soon conclude,
If I don't come and act an Interlude:
They vote me still the Prolocutor's chair;
Besides, I am to make th' *Encænia* there,

Occaſioned by the Tranſlation of Eraſmus his

MORIÆ ENCOMIUM.

SInce awkward *Folly* is ſo neatly drawn,
And all its charms in *nakedneſs* are ſhown,
Since barren *Wiſdom* unattended ſits,
And no Reſpect, and few *Encomiums* meets,
Too poor to keep an Equipage of Wits;
Bleſt is the Senceleſs man, the thickeſt skull,
The grinning, hardned, and undaunted Fool:
Bleſs't are the *Dutch*, who this their Idol prize,
And wiſely fall its humble Votaries.
Their Worths the Preſs doth often ſpeak with pain,
The Preſs, to all a Pimp, and Bawd for Gain.
To th' world each ſtrives to ſhew his learned ſoul
And in great letters writes himſelf an OWL.
But though when living they abuſes meet,
By being dead they fame and credit get;
In Epitaph ſome hundred Pounds are ſpent,
And every Fool hath then a *Monument*.
Leyden in Phyſick Tracts would often pleaſe,
Our *only* ſickneſs, and the *worſt* diſeaſe;

Hithe

Hither their vast, dull Commentators sail,
And shew that Gospellers *sometimes* may fail.
In waters bred they *Inundations* drew,
And load all Nations with a *Deluge* too.
Happy, then happy must our Island be,
With Parsons stock't, and *Dutch* Divinity:
Yet these our wise, mistaken crowd desire,
And all that from beyond Sea come, admire.
To our fine Ladies *Paris* thus unlades,
Its Ribbonds, Lacqueys, and its Chamber-maids.
The *French* indeed have often broak the peace,
But Fashions, and Romance do plague us less:
For no man now securely lives at home,
The *Turks* and *Dutch* invade our Christendom.
In's native soil their Dulness safe may rest,
But why should they their Neighbours thus infest?
To *Holland Grotius* by *mistake* was sent,
Sure that man Nature for our *England* meant.
Their worlds in all things still must us obey,
As Lords, and Sovereigns by Land, and Sea.
De Wit, *Trump*, *Ruyter*, easily were beat,
Their Ships from ours do naturally retreat,
Erasmus only does remain *unconquer'd* yet.
That name alone (worthy the noblest Muse)

 Does

Does from disgrace, and utmost scorn excuse.
His youthful, neatest style attones for all
Their Clumsiness, a sin that's National.
In Comick dress he gravely preaches sense,
Directs, and jeers, and chides his Audience.
O're thoughts profound Mirth dances all the way,
Like the Sun-beams that on deep waters play.
Henceforth I'le all laborious trifles slight,
Thy works can teach to talk, and how to write.
Cease then ye Sotts, that us in spight of Fate
By damn'd Buffoonery would imitate.
You that by Tavern-*jests* a fame would get,
And feed upon the *excrements* of Wit;
To raise up mirth who basely rob the Croud,
Sing nobly out of Tune, and laugh aloud.
This from *Erasmus* Ghost much pitty drew,
He comes our Island to inform anew.
Me thinks his Ship upon the *Thames* appears,
Proud of the Weight, and Learning that it bears.
The multitude on th' banks do *shout* their joys,
To greet his Friend and Reverend *More* does rise:
The Standard is set up, the Cannons roar,
And all *Erasmus* welcom to our *English* shore.

OXON. Sept, 20.
1683.

On the Argument, and Design of the following Oration.

WHat e're the modern Satyrists o'th' Stage,
To jirk the failures of a sliding Age,
Have lavishly expos'd to publick view,
For a discharge to all from Envy due,
Here in as lively colours naked lie,
With equal Wit, and more of Modesty.
Those Poets with their free disclosing Arts
Strip Vice so near to its uncomely parts,
Their Libels prove but Lessons, and they teach
Those very Crimes, which they intend t' impeach:
While here so wholsome all, though sharp to th' tast,
So briskly free, yet so resolu'dly chast,
The Virgin naked as her God of Bows,
May read or hear when blond at highest flows;
Nor more expence of Blushes thence arise,
Than while the lect'ring Matron does advise
To guard her virtue, and her honour prize.

Satyr, and Panegyrick, distant be,
Yet joyntly here they both in one agree:
The whole's a Sacrifice of Salt, and Fire,
So does the humour of the Age require

To

To chafe the Touch, and ſo foment Deſire.
As Doctrine-dandling Preachers lull aſleep
Their unattentive pent-up fold of Sheep;
The Opiated milk glews up the brain,
And th' Babes of Grace are in their Cradles lain;
While mounted Andrews, *bawdy, bold, and loud,*
Like Cocks, alarum all the drowſie Crowd,
Whoſe glittering ears are prickt as bolt upright,
As ſailing hairs are hoiſted in a ſtright:
So does it fare with croaking ſtawns oth' Preſs,
The mould oth' Subject alters the ſucceſs,
What's ſerious, like ſleep, grants Writs of Eaſe,
Satyr, and Ridicule can only pleaſe,
As if no other Animals could gape
But th' biting Badger, or the ſnickring Ape.

Folly by Irony's commended here,
Sooth'd, that her weakneſs may the more appear.
Thus Fools, who trick'd in red and yellow ſhine,
Are made believe that they are wondrous fine,
When all's a plot t' expoſe them by deſign.
The Largeſſes of Folly here are ſtrown
Like Pebbles, not to Pick, but Trample on.
Thus Spartans *laid their ſoaking Slaves before*

The

The Boys to juſtle, kick, and tumble o're;
Not that the dry-lipt Youngſters might combine
To taſt and know the myſtery of Wine,
But wonder thus at men transform'd to Swine;
And, th' Power of ſuch Enchantments to eſcape,
Timely renounce the Devil of the Grape.

So here,
Though Folly Speaker be, and Argument,
Wit guides the Tongue, Wiſdom's the Lecture meant.

A Prefatory Epiſtle FROM ERASMUS TO Sr. THO: MOOR.

IN my late Travels from Italy *into* England, *that I might not triſle away my time in the rehearſal of old wives fables, I thought it more pertinent to imploy my thoughts in reflecting upon ſome paſt ſtudies, or calling to remembrance ſeveral of thoſe highly learned, as well as ſmartly ingenious Friends I had here left behind: Among whom you (Dear SIR) were repreſented as the chief, You whoſe memory, while abſent at this diſtance, I reſpect with no leſs a complacency, than I was wont while preſent to enjoy your more intimate converſation; which laſt afforded me the greateſt ſatisfaction I could poſ-*

ſibly hope for. Having therefore reſolved to be a doing, and deeming that time improper for any ſerious concerns, I thought good to divert my ſelf with drawing up a Panegyrick upon Folly. How! What maggot (ſay you) put this in your head? Why, the Firſt hint (Sir) was your own Sirname of Moor, *which comes as near the literal ſound of the* *word, *as you your ſelf are diſtant from the ſignification of it, and That in all mens judgments is vaſtly wide. In the next place I ſuppoſed that this kind of ſporting Wit would be by you more eſpecially accepted of, by You (Sir) that are wont with this ſort of jocoſe raillery (ſuch as, if I miſtake not, is neither dull, nor impertinent) to be mightily pleaſed, and in your ordinary converſe to approve your ſelf a* Democritus junior: *For truly as you do from a ſingular vein of wit very much diſſent from the common herd of mankind, ſo by an incredible affability and pliableneſs of temper you have the art of ſuiting your humour with all ſorts of companies. I hope therefore you will not onely readily accept of this rude Eſſay as a token from your friend, but take it under your more immediate protection, as being dedicated to you, and by that title adopted for* yours, *rather than to be fathered as my* own. *And it is a chance if there be wanting ſome quarrelſome perſons, that will ſhew their teeth, and pre-*

* Μωρία

pretend these Fooleries *are either too* Buffoon-*like for a grave* Divine, *or too Satyrical for a meek* Christian, *and so will exclaim against me as if I were vamping up some old Farce, or acted a-new the* Lucian *again with a peevish snarling at all things. But those who are offended at the Lightness and Pedantry of this Subject, I would have them consider, that I do not set my self for the first example in this kind, but that the same has been oft done by many considerable Authors. For thus several Ages since* Homer *wrot of no more weighty a subject than of a war between the Frogs and Mice:* Virgil *of a Gnatt and a Pud-dingcake, and* Ovid *of a Nut.* Polycrates *commended the cruelty of* Busiris; *and* Isocrates, *that corrects him for this, did as much for the injustice of* Glaucus. Favorinus *extoll'd* Ther-sites, *and wrote in praise of a Quartane Ague.* Synecius *pleaded in behalf of Baldness, and* Lu-cian *defended a Sipping-fly.* Seneca *drollingly related the Deifying of* Claudius, Plutarch *the Dialogue betwixt* Gryllus *and* Ulysses, Lu-cian *and* Apuleius *the story of an Ass, and some body else records the last Will of a Hog, of which St.* Hierom *makes mention. So that if they please, let themselves think the worst of me, and fancy to themselves, that I were all this while a playing at push-pin, or riding a stride on a Hobby-horse. For how unjust is it, if, when we allow different*

recreations to each particular course of life, we afford no diversion to Studies? especially when Trifles may be a whet to more serious thoughts, and Comical matters may be so treated of, as that a Reader of ordinary sense may possibly thence reap more advantage than from some more big and stately Argument: As while one in a long-winded Oration descants in commendation of Rhetorick or Philosophy, another in a fulsom harangue sets forth the praise of his Nation, a third makes a zealous invitation to a Holy War with the Turks, *another confidently sets up for a Fortune-teller, and a fifth states questions upon meer impertinencies. But as nothing is more childish than to handle a serious subject in a loose wanton stile, so is there nothing more pleasant than so to treat of* Trifles, *as to make them seem nothing less than what their name imports. As to what relates to my self, I must be forced to submit to the judgment of Others: yet except I am too partial to be judge in my own case, I am apt to believe I have praised* Folly *in such a manner as not to have deserved the name of a* Fool *for my pains. To reply now to the objection of Satyricalness, Wits have been always allowed this Priviledge, that they might be smart upon any transactions of life, if so be their liberty did not extend to railing: which makes me wonder at the tender-ear'd humour of this Age, which*

will

will admit of no addreſs without the prefatory repetition of all formal titles, nay you may find ſome ſo prepoſterouſly devout, that they will ſooner wink at the greateſt affronts againſt our Saviour, than be content that a Prince or a Pope ſhould be nettled with the leaſt joque or gird, eſpecially in what relates to their ordinary cuſtoms. But he who ſo blames mens irregularities, as to laſh at no one particular perſon by name, does he (I ſay) ſeem to carp ſo properly as to teach and inſtruct? And if ſo, how am I concerned to make any farther excuſe? Beſide, he who in his ſtrictures points indifferently at all, he ſeems not angry at one man, but at all vices.

Therefore if any ſingly complain they are particularly reflected upon, they do but betray their own Guilt, at leaſt their Cowardice. St. Hierom dealt in the ſame argument at a much freer and ſharper rate, nay and he did not ſometime refrain from naming the perſons: whereas I have not only ſtifled the mentioning any one perſon, but have ſo tempered my ſtile, as the ingenious Reader will eaſily perceive I aimed at Diverſions rather than Satyr. Neither did I ſo far imitate Juvenal, as to rake into the ſink of Vices to procure a Laughter, rather than create a hearty Abhorrence. If there be any one that after all remains yet unſatisfied, let him at leaſt conſider, that there may be good uſe made of being

ing reprehended by Folly, *which ſince we have feigned as ſpeaking, we muſt keep up that character which is ſuitable to the perſon introduced.*

But why do I trouble you (Sir) with this needleſs Apology. You that are ſo peculiar a Patron, as though the cauſe it ſelf be none of the beſt, you can at the leaſt give it the beſt Protection. Farewell.

A PANEGYRICK UPON FOLLY.

Declamation-wise.

FOLLY speaks.

HOW slightly soever I am esteemed in the common vogue of the world, (for I well know how disingenuously Folly is decryed even by those who are themselves the greatest fools) yet it is from my influence alone that the whole Universe receives her ferment of mirth and jollity: Of which This may be urged as a convincing argument, in that as soon as I appeared to speak before this numerous Assembly, all their countenances were guilded o're with a lively sparkling pleasantness: You soon welcomed me with so encouraging a look, you spurr'd me on with so chearfull a Hum, that truly in all appearance you seem now flushed with a good dose of revi-

reviving Nectar, when as just before you sate drousie and melancholly, as if you were lately come out of some Hermits cell. But as it is usual, that as soon as the Sun peeps from her Eastern bed, and draws back the curtains of the darksom night, or as when after a hard winter the restorative Spring breaths a more enlivening air, Nature forthwith changes her apparrel, and all things seem to renew their age; so at the first sight of me, you all unmasque, and appear in more lively colours. That therefore which expert Orators can scarce effect by all their little artifice of Eloquence, to wit, a raising the attentions of their auditors to a composedness of thought, This a bare look from me has commanded. The reason why I appear in this odd kind of garb you shall soon be informed of, if for so short a while you will but have the patience to lend me an ear; yet not such an one as you are wont to hearken with to your reverend Preachers, but as you listen withall to Mountebanks, Buffoons, and Merry-*Andrews*; in short, such as formerly were fastned to *Midas*, as a punishment for his affront to the God *Pan*. For I am now in a humour to act a while the *Sophist*, yet not of that sort who undertake the drudgery of tyrannizing over School-boys, and teach a more than womanish knack of brawling; but in imitation of those antient ones, who to avoid the scandalous Epithete of *Wise*, preferr'd this title of *Sophists*; the task of these was to celebrate the worth of Gods and Heroes. Prepare therefore to be entertained with a *Panegyrick*, yet not upon *Hercules*, *Solon*, or any other

other Grandee, but on my self, that is, upon *Folly*.

And here I value not their censure that pretend it is foppish and affected for any person to praise himself: yet let it be as silly as they please, if they will but allow it needful: And indeed what is more befitting than that *Folly* should be the trumpet of her own praise, and dance after her own pipe? For who can set me forth better than my self, or who can pretend to be so well acquainted with my condition?

And yet farther I may safely urge, that all this is no more than the same with what is done by several seemingly great and wise men, who with a new fashioned modesty employ some paltry Orator or scribling Poet, whom they bribe to flatter them with some high-flown character, that shall consist of meer lies and shams: and yet the persons thus extoll'd shall bristle up, and Peacock-like bespread their plumes, while the impudent Parasite magnifies the poor wretch to the skies, and proposes him as a complete pattern of all virtues, from each of which he is yet as far distant as Heaven it self from Hell: What's all this in the mean while, but the tricking up a *Daw* in stoln feathers, a labouring to change the *Blackamores* hue, and the drawing on a *Pigmie*'s frock over the shoulders of a *Giant*.

Lastly, I verifie the old observation, that allows him a right of praising himself, who has no body else to do it for him: For really I cannot but admire at that ingratitude shall I term it, or blockishness of mankind, who when they all-willingly

lingly pay to me their utmoſt devoir, and freely acknowledge their reſpective obligations; that notwithſtanding this there ſhould have been none ſo grateful or complaiſant as to have beſtowed on me a commendatory Oration, eſpecially when there have not been wanting ſuch as at a great expence of ſweat and loſs of ſleep, have in elaborate ſpeeches given high Encomiums to Tyrants, Agues, Flies, Baldneſs, and ſuch like trumperies.

I ſhall entertain you with a haſty and unpremeditated, but ſo much the more natural diſcours; my venting it *ex tempore* I would not have you think proceeds from any principles of vain-glory, by which ordinary Orators ſquare their attempts, who (as it is eaſie to obſerve) when they are delivered of a Speech that has been thirty years a conceiving, may perhaps at laſt none of their own, yet they'l ſwear they wrot it in a great hurry, and upon very ſhort warning: whereas the reaſon of my not being provided before hand, is only becauſe it was alway my humour conſtantly to *ſpeak* that which lies *uppermoſt*. Next, let no one be ſo fond as to imagine that I ſhould ſo far ſtint my invention to the method of other Pleaders, as firſt to *define*, and then *divide* my ſubject, *i. e.* my ſelf. For it is equally hazardous to attempt the crowding her within the narrow limits of a Definition whoſe nature is of ſo diffuſive an extent, or to mangle and disjoyn That, to the adoration whereof all Nations unitedly concur. Beſide, to what purpoſe is it to lay down a Definition for a faint reſemblance and meer ſhadow of me, while appearing here perſonally you may view me at a more

more certain light? And if your eye-sight fail not, you may at first blush discern me to be her whom the Greeks term Μωρία, the Latins *Stultitia*.

But why need I have been so impertinent as to have told you This, as if my very Looks did not sufficiently betray what I am, or supposing any be so credulous as to take me for some sage Matron or Goddess of Wisdom, as if a single glance from me would not immediately correct their mistake, while my Visage, the exact reflex of my Soul, would supply and supersede the trouble of any other confessions: For I appear alway in my natural colours, and an unartificial dress, and never let my face pretend one thing, and my heart conceal another: Nay, and in all things I am so true to my Principles, that I cannot be so much as counterfeited even by those who challenge the name of *Wits*, yet indeed are no better than Jack-anapes trick'd up in gawdy cloaths, and *Asses* strutting in *Lions skins*; and how cunningly so ere they carry it, their long *ears* appear, and betray what they are. These in troth are very rude, and disingenuous, for while they apparently belong to my party, yet among the vulgar they are so ashamed of my relation, as to cast it in others dish for a shame and reproach: Wherefore since they are so eager to be accounted *wise*, when in truth they are extremely *silly*, what if to give them their due I dubb them with the title of *wise fools*: And herein they copy after the example of some modern Orators, who swell to that proportion of conceitedness, as to vaunt themselves for so many Giants of Eloquence, if with a dou-

ble tongu'd fluency they can plead indifferently for either ſide, and deem it a very doughty exploit, if they can but enterlard a Latin ſentence with ſome Greek word, which for ſeeming garniſh they croud in at a venture; and rather than be at a ſtand for ſome cramp words, they'l furbiſh up a long ſcroul of old obſolete terms out of ſome muſty author, and foiſt them in to amuſe the Reader with, that thoſe who underſtand them may be tickled with the happineſs of being acquainted with them, and thoſe who underſtand them not, the leſs they know, the more they may admire: Whereas it has been alway a cuſtom to thoſe of our ſide to contemn and undervalue whatever is ſtrange and unuſual, while thoſe that are better conceited of themſelves will nod, and ſmile, and prick up their ears, that they may be thought eaſily to apprehend that, of which perhaps they do not underſtand one word. And ſo much for This, pardon the Digreſſion, now I return.

Of my Name I have informed you, *Sirs*, what additional Epithete to give you I know not, except you'l be content with that of *Moſt Fooliſh*; for under what more proper appellation can the Goddeſs *Folly* greet her *Devotes*? But ſince there are few acquainted with my family, and original, Ile now give you ſome account of my *Extraction*.

Firſt then, my *Father* was neither the Chaos, nor Hell, nor *Saturn*, nor *Jupiter*, nor any of thoſe old, worn out, Grandſire Gods, but *Plutus*, the very ſame that, maugre *Homer*, *Heſiod* nay in ſpite of *Jove* himſelf, was the primary Father

of

of the Universe: at whose alone beck for all ages Religion and Civil Policy have been successively undermined and reestablished: by whose powerful influence War, Peace, Empire, Debates, Justice, Magistracy, Marriage Leagues, Compacts, Laws, Arts, (I've almost run my self out of breath, but) in a word all affairs of Church and State, and business of private concern are severally ordered and administred: without whose assistance all the Poets gang of Deities, nay I may be so bold as to say, the very *Major-domo's* of Heaven, would either dwindle into nothing, or at least be confined to their respective homes, without any ceremonies of devotional address: whomever he combats with as an enemy, nothing can be armour-proof against his assaults; and whosoever he sides with as a friend, may grapple at even hand with *Jove*, and all his bolts. Of such a Father I may well brag: And he begot me, not of his brain as *Jupiter* did the Hag *Pallas*, but of a pretty young Nymph, fam'd for wit no less than beauty: and this feat was not done amidst the embraces of dull nauseous Wedlock, but what gave a greater gust to the pleasure it was done at a *stoll'n bout*, as we may modestly phrase it. But to prevent your mistaking me, I would have you understand, that my Father was not that *Plutus* in *Aristophanes*, old, dry, wither'd, sapless, and blind; but the same in his younger and brisker days, and when his veins were more impregnated, and the heat of his youth somewhat higher inflamed by a chirping cup of Nectar, which for a whet to his lust he had just before drank very

freely

freely of at a merry-meeting of the Gods. And now presuming you may be inquisitive after my *Birth-place*, (the quality of the place we are born in being now look'd upon as a main ingredient of Gentility) I were born neither in the floating *Delos*, nor on the frothy Sea, nor in any of these privacies, where too forward Mothers are wont to retire for an undiscovered delivery, but in the Fortunate Islands, where all things grow without the toil of husbandry, wherein there is no drudgery, no distempers, no old age, where in the fields grow no Daffadillies, Mallows, Onions, Pease, Beans, or such kind of trash; but there give equal divertisement to our sight and smelling, Rue, All-heal, Bugloss, Marjoram, Herb of Life, Roses, Violets, Hyacinth, and such like fragrancies as perfume the gardens of *Adonis*. And being born amongst these delights I did not like other infants come crying into the world, but perk't up and laugh'd immediately in my Mothers face. And there is no reason I should envy *Jove* for having a She-goat to his *Nurse*, since I were more creditably *suckled* by two jolly Nymphs; the name of the first *Drunkenness*, one of *Bacchus*'s off-spring, the other *Ignorance* the daughter of *Pan*, both which you may here behold among several others of my Train and Attendants, whose particular names if you would fain know, I'le give you in short. This who goes with a mincing gate, and holds up her head so high, is *Self-love*. She that looks so spruce, and makes such a noise and bustle, is *Flattery*. That other, which sits hum drum, as if she were half

half asleep, is call'd *Forgetfulness*. She that leans on her elbow, and sometime yawningly stretches out her arms, is *Laziness*. This that wears a plighted garland of flowers, and smells so perfumed, is *Pleasure*. The other, which appears in so smooth a skin, and pampred up flesh, is *Sensuality*. She that stares so wildly, and rolls about her eys, is *Madness*. As to those two Gods whom you see playing among the Lasses, the name of the one is *Intemperance*, the other *Sound sleep*. By the help and service of this retinue I bring all things under the verge of my power, lording it over the greatest Kings and Potentates.

You have now heard of my Descent, my Education, and my Attendance. That I may not be taxed as presumptious in borrowing the title of a *Goddess*, I come now in the next place to acquaint you what obliging favours I every where bestow, and how largely my jurisdiction extends: For if, as one has ingenuously noted, to be a *God* is no other than to be a *Benefactor* to mankind, and if they have been thought deservedly deified who have invented the use of Wine, Corn, or any other Convenience for the well being of Mortals; why may not I justly bear the Van among the whole troop of Gods, who in all, and toward all exert an unparallel'd bounty and beneficence?

For instance, in the first place what can be more dear and pretious than Life it self? and yet for this are none beholden save to Me alone. For it is neither the Spear of throughly-begotten *Pallas*, nor the Buckler of cloud-gathering *Jove*, that multiplies and propagates Mankind:

kind: but that prime Father of the Universe, who at a displeasing nod makes heaven it self to tremble, He (I say) must lay aside his frightful Ensigns of Majesty, and put away that grim aspect wherewith he makes the other Gods to quake, and Stageplayer-like must alter his usual character, if he would do that, the doing whereof he cannot refrain from, *i.e.* getting of children. The next place to the Gods is challenged by the *Stoicks*; but give me one as Stoical as ill nature can make him, and if I do not prevail on him to part with his Beard, that bush of wisdom, (though no other ornament than what Nature in more ample manner has given to Goats) yet at least he shall lay by his gravity, smooth up his brow, relinquish his rigid Tenets, and in despite of prejudice become sensible of some passion in wanton sport and dallying; in a word, this Dictator of wisdom shall be glad to take Folly for his diversion, if ever he would arrive to the honour of a Father. And why should I not tell my story out? To proceed then, Is it the head, the face, the breasts, the hands, the ears, or other more comely parts that serve for instruments of generation, I trow not, but it is that member of our body which is so odd and uncouth, as can scarce be mentioned without a smile: This part I say is that fountain of life, from which originally spring all things in a truer sense than from the Elemental Seminary. Add to this, what man would be so silly, as to run his head into the collar of a *matrimonial noose*, if (as wise men are wont to do) he had beforehand duly considered the inconveniences

niences of a wedded life? or indeed what woman would open her arms to receive the embraces of a *husband*, if she did but forecast the pangs of child-birth, and the plague of being a Nurse? Since then you owe your Birth to the Bride-bed, and (what was preparatory to that) the solemnizing of Marriage to my waiting-woman Madness, you cannot but acknowledge how much you are indebted to me. Beside, those who had once dearly bought the experience of their folly, would never reengage themselves in the same intanglement by a *second match*, if it were not occasioned by the forgetfulness of past dangers. And *Venus* her self (whatever *Lucretius* pretends to the contrary) cannot deny, but that without my assistance her procreative power would prove weak and ineffectual. It was from my sportive and tickling recreation that proceeded the old crabbed Philosophers, and those who now supply their stead, the mortified Monks and Friers, as also Kings, Priests, and Popes, nay the whole tribe of Poetick Gods, who are at last grown so numerous, as in the camp of Heaven (though ne're so spacious) to *justle* for elbow room. But it is not sufficient to have made it appear that I am the source and original of all Life, except I likewise shew, that all the benefits of Life are equally at my disposal. And what are such? Why, can any one be said properly to live, to whom Pleasure is denied? You'll give me your assent, for there is none I know among you, so wise shall I say, or so silly, as to be of a contrary opinion. The Stoicks indeed contemn, and pre-

tend to baniſh *Pleaſure*, but this is only a diſſembling trick, and a putting the vulgar out of conceit with it, that they may more quietly engroſs it to themſelves: But I dare them now to confeſs what one ſtage of Life is not melancholly, dull, tireſome, tedious, and uneaſie, unleſs we ſpice it with *Pleaſure*, that haut gouſt of Folly. Of the truth whereof the never enough to be commended *Sophocles* is ſufficient authority, who gives me the higheſt character in that ſentence of his,

To know nothing is the ſweeteſt life.

Yet abating from this, let us examine the caſe more narrowly: Who knows not that the firſt ſcene of *Infancy* is far the moſt pleaſant and delightſome? what then is it in children, that makes us ſo kiſs, hug, and play with them, and that the bloudieſt enemy can ſcarce have the heart to hurt them, but their Ingredients of Innocence and Folly, of which Nature out of providence did purpoſely compound and blend their tender Infancy, that by a frank return of Pleaſure they might make ſome ſort of amends for their Parents trouble, and give in caution as it were for the diſcharge of a future education? The next advance from Childhood is *Youth*, and how favourably is this dealt with, how kind courteous, and reſpectful are all to it, and how ready to become ſerviceable upon all occaſions? And whence reaps it this happineſs, whence indeed but from me only, by whoſe procurement it is furniſhed with little of wiſdom, and ſo with the leſs of diſquiet? And when once Lads begin to grow up, and attempt to write *Man*, their prettineſs does then

ſoon

ſoon decay, their briskneſs flags, their humours ſtagnate, their jollity ceaſes, and their blood grows cold: and the farther they proceed in years, the more they go backward in the enjoyment of themſelves, till waſpiſh old age comes on, a burden to it ſelf as well as others, and that ſo heavy and oppreſſive, as none would bear the weight of, unleſs out of pity to their ſufferings I again intervene, and lend a helping hand, aſſiſting them at a dead lift, in the ſame method the Poets feign their Gods to ſuccour dying men, by transforming them into new creatures, which I do by bringing them back, after they have one foot in the grave, to their Infancy again; ſo as there is a great deal of truth couched in that old Proverb, *Once an old man, and twice a child.* Now if any one be curious to underſtand what courſe I take to effect this alteration, my method is this: I bring them to my Well of *Forgetfulneſs*, (the fountain whereof is in the Fortunate Iſlands, and the river *Lethe* in hell but a ſmall ſtream of it) and when they have there fill'd their bellies full, and waſh'd down care, by the virtue and operation whereof they become young again. Ay, but (ſay you) they meerly *dote*, and play the *fool*: why yes, This is what I mean by growing young again: For what elſe is it to be a Child, than to be a Fool and an Idiot? It is the being ſuch that makes that age ſo acceptable: For who does not eſteem it ſomewhat ominous to ſee a Boy endowed with the diſcretion of a Man, and therefore for the curbing of too forward parts we have a diſparaging Proverb, *ſoon ripe, ſoon rotten*? And farther,

who would keep company, or have any thing to do with ſuch an old blade, as after the wear and harrowing of ſo many years, ſhould yet continue of as clear a head, and ſound a judgment, as he had at any time been in his middle age; and therefore it is a great kindneſs of me that old men grow *fools*, ſince it is hereby only that they are freed from ſuch vexations, as would torment them, if they were more *wiſe*: They can drink briskly, bear up ſtoutly, and lightly paſs over ſuch infirmities, as a far ſtronger conſtitution could ſcarce maſter. Sometime with the old fellow in *Plautus* they are brought back to their *horn-book* again, to learn to ſpell their fortune in love: Moſt wretched would they needs be, if they had but wit enough to be ſenſible of their hard condition, but by my aſſiſtance they carry off all well, and to their reſpective friends approve themſelves good ſociable jolly companions. Thus *Homer* makes aged *Neſtor* famed for a ſmooth oyly-tongu'd Orator, while the delivery of *Achilles* was but rough, harſh, and hæſitant; and the ſame *Poet* elſewhere tells us of old men that ſate on the walls, and ſpake with a great deal of flouriſh and elegance. And in this point indeed they ſurpaſs and outgo children, who are pretty forward in a ſoftly, innocent *prattle*, but otherwiſe are too much toung-tied, and want the others moſt acceptable embelliſhment of a perpetual *talkativeneſs*. Add to this, that old men love to be playing with children, and children delight as much in them to verifie the Proverb, that *Birds of a feather flock together*. And indeed what difference can be diſcerned between them, but that the one

is more furrowed with wrinkles, and has seen a little more of the world than the other? for otherwise their whitish hair, their want of teeth, their smalness of stature, their milk diet, their bald crowns, their pratling, their playing, their short memory, their heedlesness, and all their other endowments exactly agree; and the more they advance in years, the nearer they come back to their cradle, till like children indeed at last they depart the world without any remorse at the loss of life, or sense of the pangs of death.

And now let any one compare the excellency of my metamorphosing power to that which *Ovid* attributes to the Gods, their strange feats in some drunken passions we will omit for their credit sake, and instance only in such persons as they pretended great kindnesses for; These they transformed into Trees, Birds, Insects, and sometimes Serpents: but alas, their very change into somewhat else, argues the destruction of what they were before, Whereas I can restore the same numerical man to his pristine state of youth, health, and strength: yea, what is more, if men would but so far consult their own interest, as to discard all thoughts of wisdom, and entirely resign themselves to my guidance and conduct, Old age should be a Paradox, and each mans years a perpetual Spring. For look how your hard plodding *Students*, by a close sedentary confinement to their books, grow mopish, pale, and meagre, as if by a continual wrack of brains and torture of invention their veins were pumped dry, and their whole body squeez'd sapless; whereas my followers

lowers are ſmooth, plump, and buckſom, and altogether as luſty as ſo many Bacon-hogs, or ſucking Calves, never in their career of pleaſure to be arreſted with old age, if they could but keep themſelves untainted from the contagiouſneſs of Wiſdom, with the leproſie whereof if at any time they are infected, it is only for prevention, leſt they ſhould otherwiſe have been too happy.

For a more ample confirmation of the truth of what foregoes, it is on all ſides confeſs'd that Folly is the beſt preſervative of Youth and the moſt effectual antidote againſt Age. And it is a never failing obſervation made of the people of *Brabant*, that contrary to the Proverb of *Older and wiſer*, the more antient they grow, the more fools they are, and there is not any one Country whoſe inhabitants enjoy themſelves better, and rub through the world with more eaſe and quiet. To theſe are nearly related, as well by affinity of cuſtoms, as of neighbourhood, my friends the *Hollanders*, *Mine* I may well call them, for they ſtick ſo cloſe and lovingly to me, that they are ſtiled *Fools* to a Proverb, and yet ſcorn to be aſhamed of their name. Well, let fond mortals go now in a needleſs queſt of ſome *Medea*, *Circe*, *Venus*, or ſome enchanted fountain for a Reſtorative of age, whereas the accurate performance of this feat lies only within the ability of my art and skill.

It is I only who have the Receipt of making that liquor, wherewith *Memnons* daughter lengthened out her grandfather's declining days: It is I that am that *Venus*, who ſo far reſtored the languiſhing

guiſhing *Phaon*, as to make *Sapho* fall deeply in love with his beauty. Mine are thoſe herbs, mine thoſe charms, that not only lure back ſwift Time, when paſt and gone, but (what is more to be admired) clip its wings, and prevent all farther flight. So then if you will all agree to my verdict, that nothing is more deſirable than the being young, nor any thing more loathed than contemptible old age, you muſt needs acknowledge it as an unrequitable obligation from me for fencing off the one, and perpetuating the other.

But why ſhould I confine my diſcourſe to the narrow ſubject of mankind only? View the whole Heaven it ſelf, and there tell me what one of that Divine tribe would not be mean and deſpicable, if my name did not lend him ſome reſpect and authority. Why is *Bacchus* alway painted as a *young man*, but only becauſe he is freakiſh, drunk, and mad, and ſpending his time in toping, dancing, maſquing, and revelling, ſeems to have nothing in the leaſt to do with Wiſdom? nay ſo far is he from the affectation of being accounted wiſe, that he is content all the rites of devotion which are paid unto him, ſhould conſiſt of apiſhneſs and drollery. Farther, what ſcoffs and jeers did not the old Comedians throw upon him? *O ſwiniſh paunch-gut God*, (ſay they) *that ſmells rank of the thigh he was ſowed up in*, and ſo on. But prethee, who in his caſe, alway merry, youthful, ſoaked in wine, and drowned in pleaſures? who (I ſay) in ſuch a caſe would change conditions either with the lofty menace-looking *Jove*, the grave, yet timerous *Pan*, the ſtate-

ſtately *Pallas*, or indeed any one other of heavens Land lords? Why is *Cupid* feigned as a boy, but only becauſe he is an under-witted whipſter, that neither acts nor thinks any thing with diſcretion? Why is *Venus* adored for the mirrour of beauty, but only becauſe ſhe and I claim kindred, ſhe being of the ſame complexion with my *father Plutus*, and therefore call'd by *Homer* the *golden Goddeſs*? beſide, ſhe imitates me in being alway a laughing, if either we believe the *Poets*, or their neer kinſmen the *Painters*, the firſt *mentioning*, the other *drawing* her conſtantly in that poſture. Add farther, to what Deity did the *Romans* pay a more ceremonial reſpect than to *Flora*, that bawd of Obſcenity? And if any one ſearch the Poets for an hiſtorical account of the Gods, he ſhall find them all famous for lewd pranks and debaucheries. It is needleſs to inſiſt upon the miſcarriages of others, when the Iacherous intregues of *Jove* himſelf are ſo notorious, and when the pretendedly chaſt *Diana* ſo oft uncloak'd her modeſty to run a hunting after her beloved *Endimion*. But I'le ſay no more, for I had rather They ſhould be told of their faults by *Momus*, who was wont formerly to ſting them with ſome cloſe reflexions, till nettled by his abuſive raillery, they kick'd him out of heaven for his ſaucineſs of daring to reprove ſuch as were beyond correction: and now in his baniſhment from heaven he finds but cold entertainment here on earth, nay is denied all admittance into the Court of Princes, where notwithſtanding my hand-maid *Flattery* finds a moſt encouraging welcome:

come: But this petulant Monitor being thruſt out of doors, the Gods can now more freely rant and revel, and take their whole ſwinge of pleaſure: Now the beaſtly *Priapus* may recreate himſelf without contradiction in luſt and filthineſs, now the ſly *Mercury* may without diſcovery go on in his thieveries, and nimble-finger'd juggles; the ſooty *Vulcan* may now renew his wonted cuſtom of making the other Gods laugh by his hopping ſo limpingly, and coming off with ſo many dry joques and biting Repartees. *Silenus* the old doting Lover, to ſhew his activity, may now dance a friſking Jig, and the *Nymphs* be at the ſame ſport *naked*. The goatiſh *Satyrs* may make up a merry Ball, and *Pan* the blind-harper may put up his Bag-pipes, and ſing baudy catches, to which the Gods eſpecially, when they are almoſt drunk, ſhall give a moſt profound attention. But why ſhould I any farther rip open and expoſe the weakneſs of the Gods, a weakneſs ſo childiſh and abſurd, that no man can at the ſame time keep his countenance, and make a relation of it? Now therefore, like *Homer*'s wandring *Muſe*, I'le take my leave of Heaven, and come down again here below, where we ſhall find nothing happy, nay nothing tolerable without my preſence and aſſiſtance. And in the firſt place conſider, how providently Nature has took care that in all her works there ſhould be ſome piquant ſmack and reliſh of *Folly*: for ſince the *Stoicks* define Wiſdom to be a conduct by *Reaſon*, and *Folly* nothing elſe but the being hurried by *Paſſion*; leſt our life ſhould otherwiſe have been too dull and unactive,

That creatour, who out of Clay first tempered and made us up, put into the composition of our humanity more than a pound of Passions to an ounce of Reason, and Reason he confined within the narrow cells of the *Brain*, whereas he left Passions the *whole body* to range in. Farther, he set up two sturdy champions to stand perpetually on the guard, that Reason might make no assault, surprise, nor inroad; *Anger* which keeps its station in the fortress of the *heart*, and *Lust*, which like the Signs *Virgo* and *Scorpio*, rules the *belly* and *secret members*. Against the forces of these two warriors how unable is Reason to bear up, and withstand, every days experience does abundantly witness; while let Reason be never so importunate in urging and reinforcing her admonitions to virtue, yet the Passions bear all before them, and by the least offer of curb or restraint grow but more imperious, till Reason it self for quietness sake is forced to desist from all farther remonstrance. But because it seem'd expedient that Man, who was born for the transaction of business, should have so much wisdom as should fit and capacitate him for the discharge of his duty herein, and yet least such a measure as is requisite for this purpose might prove too dangerous and fatal, I were advised with for an Antidote, who prescribed this infallible receipt of *taking a wife*, a creature so harmless, and silly, and yet so useful, and convenient, as might mollifie, and make pliable the stifness and morose humour of Man. Now that which made *Plato* doubt under what *Genus* to rank *Woman*, whether among

Brutes

Brutes or Rational creatures, was only meant to denote the extreme ſtupidneſs and folly of that ſexe; a ſex ſo unalterably ſimple, that for any of them to thruſt forward and reach at the name of *wiſe*, is but to make themſelves the more remarkable *fools*, ſuch an endeavour being but a ſwimming againſt the ſtream, nay a turning the courſe of nature, the bare attempting whereof is as extravagant as the effecting of it is impoſſible: for as it is a trite Proverb, that *an Ape will be an Ape though clad in purple*, ſo a woman will be a woman, *i. e.* a fool whatever diſguiſe ſhe takes up. And yet there is no reaſon Women ſhould take it amiſs to be thus charged, for if they do but rightly conſider, they'l find that it is to folly they are beholden for thoſe endowments, wherein they ſo far ſurpaſs and excell man; as firſt for their unparallel'd beauty, by the charm whereof they tyrannize over the greateſt Tyrants: for what is it but too great a ſmatch of wiſdom that makes men ſo tawny and thick-skin'd, ſo rough and prickly-bearded, like an Emblem of winter or old age, while women have ſuch dainty ſmooth cheeks, ſuch a low gentle voice, and ſo pure a complexion, as if Nature had drawn them for a ſtanding pattern of all ſymmetry and comelineſs? Beſide, what greater or juſter aim and ambition have they than to pleaſe their husbands? in order whereunto they garniſh themſelves with Paint, Waſhes, Curls, Perfumes, and all other myſteries of ornament; yet after all, they become acceptable to them only for their folly. Wives are always allowed their humour, yet it is only in

exchange for titillation and pleaſure, which indeed are but other names for Folly; as none can deny, who conſiders, how a man muſt hug, and dandle, and kittle and play a hundred little tricks with his bed-fellow, when he is diſpoſed to make that *uſe* of her, that Nature deſign'd her for. Wel then, you ſee whence that *greateſt pleaſure* (to which modeſty ſcarce allows a name) ſprings and proceeds.

But now ſome blood-chill'd old men, that are more for *wine* than *wenching*, will pretend that in their opinion the greateſt happineſs conſiſts in feaſting, and drinking. Grant it be ſo, yet certainly in the moſt luxurious entertainments it is Folly muſt give the ſauce and reliſh to the daintieſt cates and delicacies; ſo that if there be no one of the gueſts naturally Fool enough to be played upon by the reſt, they muſt procure ſome comical Buffoon, that by his joques, and flouts, and blunders, ſhall make the whole company ſplit themſelves with laughing: for to what purpoſe were it to be ſtuff'd, and cramm'd with ſo many dainty bits, ſavoury diſhes, and toothſome rarities, if after all this Epicuriſm of the belly, the eys, ears, and whole mind of man, were not as well foſtred, and relieved with laughing, jeſting, and ſuch like divertiſements, which like ſecond courſes ſerve for the promoting of digeſtion? And as to all thoſe Shooing-horns of drunkenneſs, the keeping every one his man, the throwing Hey-jinks, the filling of bumpers, the drinking two in a hand, the beginning of Miſtreſſes healths; and then the roaring out of drunken catches, the calling in a Fidler,

Fidler, the leading out every one his Lady to dance, and ſuch like riotous paſtimes, Theſe were not taught or dictated by any of the wiſe men of *Greece*, but of *Goatham* rather, being *my* invention, and by *me* preſcribed as the beſt preſervative of health: each of which, the more ridiculous it is, the more welcome it finds. And indeed to jog ſleepingly through the world in a dumpiſh, melancholly poſture, cannot properly be ſaid to *Live*, but to be wound up as it were in a *Winding-ſheet* before we are dead, and ſo to be ſhuffled quick into a grave, and buried *alive*.

But there are yet others perhaps that have no guſt in this ſort of pleaſure, but place their greateſt content in the enjoyment of *friends*, telling us that true *friendſhip* is to be preferr'd before all other acquirements; that it is a thing ſo *uſeful*, and neceſſary, as the very Elements could not long ſubſiſt without a natural combination; ſo *pleaſant*, that it affords as warm an influence as the Sun it ſelf; ſo *honeſt*, (if honeſty in this caſe deſerve any conſideration) that the very Philoſophers have not ſtuck to place This as one among the reſt of their different ſentiments of the chiefeſt Good. But what if I make it appear, that I alſo am the main ſpring and original of this endearment? yes, I can eaſily demonſtrate it, and that not by crabbed Syllogiſms, or a crooked, and unintelligible way of arguing, but can make it (as the Proverb goes) *as plain as the noſe on your face*. Well then, to ſcratch, and curry one another, to wink at a friends faults, nay to cry up ſome failings for virtuous, and commendable, is

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not this the next door to the being a Fool? when one looking ſtedfaſtly in his Miſtreſſes face admires a Mole, as much as a Beauty ſpot, when another ſwears his Ladies ſtinking breath is a moſt redolent Perfume; and at another time the fond Parent hugs the ſquint-ey'd child, and pretends it is rather a becoming glance, and winning aſpect, than any blemiſh of the eye-ſight: What is all this, but the very heighth of Folly? Folly (I ſay) that both makes friends, and keeps them ſo. I ſpeak of Mortal men only, among whom there are none, but have ſome ſmall faults, he is moſt happy that has feweſt. If we paſs to the *Gods*, we ſhall find that they have ſo much of Wiſdom, as they have very little of Friendſhip, nay nothing of that, which is true, and hearty. The reaſon why *Men* make a greater improvement in this virtue, is only becauſe they are more credulous, and eaſie-natur'd: For friends muſt be of the ſame humour, and inclinations too, or elſe the league of Amity, though made with never ſo many proteſtations, will be ſoon broke. Thus grave, and moroſe men ſeldom prove faſt friends, they are too captious, and cenſorious, and will not bear with one anothers infirmities; they are as Eagle-ſighted as may be in the eſpial of others faults, while they wink upon themſelvs, and never mind the beam in their own eyes. In ſhort, Man being by nature ſo prone to frailties, ſo humourſom, and croſs-grain'd, and guilty of ſo many ſlips, and miſcarriages, there could be no firm friendſhip contracted, except there be ſuch an allowance made for each others defaults, which the

the Greeks term Εὐήθεια, and we may construe Good Nature, which is but another word for Folly. And what? Is not *Cupid*, that first father of all relation, is not he stark blind, that as he cannot himself distinguish of colours, so he would make us as mop-ey'd in judging falsly of all love concerns, and wheedle us into a thinking, that we are alway in the right? Thus every Jack sticks to his own Jill, every Tinker esteems his own Trull, and the hob-nailed Suitour prefers *Joan* the Milk-maid before any of my Ladies daughters. These things are true, and are ordinarily laught at, and yet however ridiculous they seem, it is hence only that all Societies receive their cement, and consolidation.

The same which has been said of Friendship is much more applicable to a *state* of *Marriage*, which is but the highest advance and improvement of friendship in the closest bond of union. Good God! What frequent divorces, or worse mischief, would oft sadly happen, except man, and wife were so discreet as to pass over light occasions of quarrel with laughing, jesting, dissembling, and such like playing the fool? Nay, how few matches would go forward, if the hasty lover did but first know how many little tricks of lust, and wantonness (and perhaps more gross failings) his coy, and seemingly bashful Mistress had oft before been guilty of? and how fewer marriages, when consummated, would continue happy, if the husband were not either sottishly insensible of, or did not purposely wink at, and pass over the lightness and forwardnes of his good-natur'd wife?

wife? This peace and quietnes is owing to my management, for there would otherwiſe be continual jars, and broils, and mad doings, if want of wit only did not at the ſame time make a contented cuckold, and a ſtill houſe; if the *Cuckow* ſing at the back door, the unthinking Cornute takes no notice of the unlucky *omen* of *others eggs being laid in his own neſt*, but laughs it over, kiſſes his dear ſpouſe, and all his well. And indeed it is much better patiently to be ſuch a hen-peckt frigot, than alway to be wrack'd and tortur'd with the grating ſurmiſes of ſuſpicion and jealouſie. In fine, there is no one ſociety, no one relation men ſtand in, would be comfortable, or indeed tolerable without my aſſiſtance; there could be no right underſtanding betwixt Prince and people, Lord and ſervant, Tutour and pupil, friend and friend, man and wife, buyer and ſeller, or any perſons however otherwiſe related, if they did not cowardly put up ſmall abuſes, ſneakingly chringe and ſubmit, or after all fawningly ſcratch and flatter each other. This you'l ſay is much, but you ſhall yet hear what is more: Tell me then, can any one love another, that firſt hates himſelf? is it likely any one ſhould agree with a friend, that is firſt fall'n out with his own Judgment? or is it probable he ſhould be any way pleaſing to another, who is a perpetual plague and trouble to himſelf? This is ſuch a Paradox that none can be ſo madd, as to maintain. Well, but if I am excluded and barr'd out, every man would be ſo far from being able to bear with others, that he would be burdenſome to himſelf, and

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conſequently uncapable of any eaſe or ſatisfaction. Nature, that toward ſome of her products playes the Step-mother rather than the indulgent Parent, has endowed ſome men with that unhappy peeviſhneſs of diſpoſition, as to nauſeate and diſlike whatever is their own, and much admire what belongs to other perſons, ſo as they cannot in any wiſe enjoy whatever their Birth or Fortune has beſtowed upon them: for what grace is there in the greateſt beauty, if it be alway clouded with frowns, and ſullineſs? or what vigour in youth, if it be harraſſed with a pettiſh, dogged, waſpiſh ill humour? none, ſure: Nor indeed can there be any creditable acquitment of our ſelves in any one ſtation of life, but we ſhould ſink without reſcue into miſery and deſpair, if we were not buoyed up and ſupported by *Self love*, which is but the eldeſt ſiſter (as it were) of Folly, and her own conſtant friend and aſſiſtant. For what is, or can be more ſilly, than to be lovers, and admirers of our ſelves? and yet if we were not ſo, there will be no reliſh to any of our words, or actions. Take away this one property of a fool, and the Orator ſhall become as dumb and ſilent as the Pulpit he ſtands in; the Muſitian ſhall hang up his untoucht Inſtruments on the wall, the compleateſt Actors ſhall be hiſs'd off the Stage, the Poet ſhall be burleſqu'd upon with his own doggrel rythms, the Painter ſhall himſelf vaniſh into an imaginary Landskip, and the Phyſician ſhall want Food more than his Patients do Phyſick. In ſhort, without Self-love, inſtead of beautiful, you ſhall think your ſelf an old

Bedlam of fourſcore; inſtead of youthful, you ſhall ſeem juſt dropping into the grave, inſtead of eloquent, a meer ſtammerer; and in lieu of gentile, and complaiſant, you ſhall appear like a downright Country clown, it being ſo neceſſary, that every one ſhould think well of himſelf, before he can expect the good opinion of others. Finally, when it is the main and eſſential part of happineſs to deſire to be no other than what we already are, this expedient is again wholly owing to Self-love, which ſo flushes men with a good conceit of their own, that no one repents of his ſhape, of his wit, of his education, or of his country; ſo as the dirty half drown'd *Hollander* would not remove into the pleaſant Plains of *Italy*, the rude *Thracian* would not change his boggy ſoil for the beſt ſeat in *Athens*, nor the brutiſh *Scythian* quit his thorny deſarts to become an inhabitant of the *Fortunate Iſlands*. And O the incomparable contrivance of Nature, who has ordered all things in ſo even a method, that where ever ſhe has been leſs bountiful in her gifts, there ſhe makes it up with a larger doſe of Self-love, which ſupplies the former defects, and makes all even. To enlarge farther, I may well preſume to aver, that there are no conſiderable exploits performed, no uſeful arts invented, but what I am the reſpective author, and manager of. As firſt, what is more lofty and heroical than *War*, and yet what is more fooliſh than for ſome petty, trivial affront to take ſuch a revenge, as both ſides ſhall be ſure to be looſers, and where the quarrel muſt be decided at the price of ſo many limbs,

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and lives? And when they come to an engagement, what ſervice can be done by ſuch pale-faced Students, as, by drudging at the oars of Wiſdom, have ſpent all their ſtrength and activity? No, the only uſe is of blunt ſturdy fellows, that have little of wit, and ſo the more of reſolution; except you would make a ſouldier of ſuch another *Demoſthenes*, as threw down his arms as ſoon as he came within ſight of the Enemy, and loſt that credit in the *Camp*, which he gained in the *Pulpit*: But Counſel, Deliberation, and Advice (ſay you) are very neceſſary for the management of War: very true, but not ſuch counſel as ſhall be preſcribed by the ſtrict rules of Wiſdom, and Juſtice; for a Battle ſhall be more ſucceſſively fought by Serving-men, Porters, Bayliffs, Padders, Rogues, Jail-birds, and ſuch like tag-rags of mankind, than by the moſt accompliſhed Philoſophers. Which laſt, how unhappy they are in the management of ſuch concerns, *Socrates* (by the Oracle adjudg'd to be the wiſeſt of mortals) is a notable example; who, when he appeared in the attempt of ſome publick performance before the people, he faltred in the firſt onſet, and could never recover himſelf, but was houted and hiſſed home again: Yet this Philoſopher was the leſs a Fool for refuſing the appellation of Wiſe, and not accepting the Oracles complement; as alſo for adviſing, that no Philoſophers ſhould have any hand in the Government of the Commonwealth; he ſhould have likewiſe at the ſame time added, that they ſhould be baniſhed all humane Society. And what made this Great man poy-

ſon himſelf to prevent the malice of his Accuſers, what made him the inſtrument of his own death, but only his exceſſiveneſs of Wiſdom? whereby, while he was ſearching into the nature of Clouds, while he was plodding and contemplating upon Ideas, while he was exerciſing his Geometry upon the meaſure of a Flea, and diving into the receſſes of Nature, for an account how little Inſects, when they were ſo ſmall, could make ſo great a buz, and hum, while he was intent upon theſe fooleries, he minded nothing of the world, or its ordinary concerns.

Next to *Socrates* comes his Scholar *Plato*, a famous Oratour indeed, that could be ſo daſht out of countenance by an illiterate rabble, as to demur, and hauk, and hæſitate, before he could get to the end of one ſhort ſentence. *Theophraſtus* was ſuch another coward, who beginning to make an Oration, was preſently ſtruck down with fear, as if he had ſeen ſome Ghoſt, or Hobgoblin. *Iſocrates* was ſo baſhful, and timerous, that though he taught Rhetorick, yet he could never have the confidence to ſpeak in publick. *Cicero*, that Maſter of *Roman* Eloquence, was wont to begin his Speeches with a low quivering voice, juſt like a *School-boy*, afraid of not ſaying his Leſſon perfect enough to eſcape *whipping*: And yet *Fabius* commends this property of *Tully*, as an argument of a conſiderate Oratour, ſenſible of the difficulty of acquitting himſelf with credit: but what hereby does he do more, than plainly confeſs that Wiſdom is but a rub, and impediment to the well management of any Affair? How would theſe

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Heroes crouch, and ſhrink into nothing at the ſight of *drawn ſwords*, that are thus quaſh'd and ſtunn'd at the delivery of *bare words?*

Now then let *Plato*'s fine ſentence be cried up, that *Happy are thoſe Common-wealths where either Philoſophers are elected Kings, or Kings turn Philoſophers.* Alas, This is ſo far from being true, that if we conſult all Hiſtorians for an account of paſt Ages, we ſhall find no Princes more weak, nor any People more ſlaviſh, and wretched, than where the Adminiſtration of Affairs fell on the ſhoulders of ſome Learned Bookiſh Governour. Of the truth whereof the two *Cato's* are exemplary Inſtances: the *firſt* of which embroiled the City, and tired out the Senate by his tedious Harangues of defending himſelf, and accuſing others; the *younger* was an unhappy occaſion of the loſs of the Peoples liberty, while by improper methods he pretended to maintain it. To theſe may be added *Brutus*, *Caſſius*, the two *Gracchi*, and *Cicero* himſelf, who was no leſs fatal to *Rome*, than his Parallel *Demoſthenes* was to *Athens*: As likewiſe *Marcus Antoninus*, whom we may allow to have been a Good *Emperour*, yet the leſs ſuch for his being a *Philoſopher*; and certainly he did not do half that kindneſs to his Empire by his own prudent management of Affairs, as he did miſchief by leaving ſuch a degenerate Succeſſour, as his Son *Commodus* proved to be. But it is a common Obſervation, that *A wiſe Father has many times a fooliſh Son*, Nature ſo contriving it, leſt the taint of Wiſdom, like Hereditary diſtempers, ſhould otherwiſe deſcend by Propagation. Thus *Tully*'s

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Son *Marcus*, though bred at *Athens*, proved but a dull insipid Soul; and *Socrates* his children had (as one ingeniously expresses it) *more of the Mother, than the Father*, a phrase for their being Fools. However it were the more excusable, though wise men were so awkward, and unhandy in the ordering of publick *affairs*, if they were not as bad, or worse in the management of their ordinary, and domestick *concerns*; but alas here they are much to seek: For place a formal Wise man at a *feast*, and he shall either by his morose silence put the whole Table out of humour, or by his frivolous questions disoblige, and tire out all that sit near him. Call him out to *dance*, and he shall move no more nimbly than a Camel: Invite him to any publick performance, and by his very looks he shall damp the mirth of all the Spectators, and at last be forced like *Cato* to leave the *Theatre*, because he cannot unstarch his gravity, nor put on a more pleasant countenance. If he be engaged in any discourse, he either breaks off abruptly, or tires out the patience of the whole company if he goes on: If he have any Contract, Sale, or Purchase to make, or any other worldly business to transact, he behaves himself more like a senseless Stock than a Rational man; so as he can be of no use, nor advantage to himself, to his friends, or to his country, because he knows nothing how the world goes, and is wholly unacquainted with the humour of the Vulgar, who cannot but hate a person so disagreeing in temper from themselves.

And indeed the whole proceedings of the world are

are nothing but one continued *Scene* of *Folly*, all the *Actors* being equally fools, and mad-men; and therefore if any be so pragmatically wise as to be singular, he must e'en turn a second *Timan*, or Man-hater, and by retiring into some unfrequented desart become a *Recluse* from all mankind.

But, to return to what I first proposed, What was it in the infancy of the world that made men, naturally savage, unite into Civil societies, but only *Flattery*, one of my chiefest virtues? For there is nothing else meant by the fables of *Amphion*, and *Orpheus* with their Harps; the first making the *Stones* jump into a well-built wall, the other inducing the *trees* to pull their leggs out of the ground, and dance the Morrice after him. What was it that quieted and appeased the *Roman* people, when they brake out into a riot for the redress of Grievances, was it any shewy, starcht Oration? No alas, it was only a silly ridiculous story, told by *Menenius Agrippa*, how the other members of the body quarrell'd with the belly, resolving no longer to continue her drudging caterers, till by the penance they thought thus in revenge to impose, they soon found their own strength so far diminished, that paying the cost of experiencing a mistake, they willingly returned to their respective duties. Thus when the Rabble of *Athens* murmured at the exaction of the Magistrates, *Themistocles* satisfied them with such another tale of the *Fox*, and the *Hedghog*; the first whereof being stuck fast in a miry bog, the Flies came swarming about him, and almost suckt out all his bloud; the latter officiously offers his ser-

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vice to drive them away; no, says the Fox, if these which are almost glutted be frighted off, there will come a new hungry Sett, that will be ten times more greedy, and devouring: The Moral of this he meant applicable to the people, who if they had such Magistrates removed as they complained of for extortion, yet their Successors would certainly be worse.

With what highest advances of Policy could *Sertorius* have kept the Barbarians so well in awe as by a white *Hart*, which he pretended was presented to him by *Diana*, and brought him intelligence of all his Enemies designs? What was *Lycurgus* his grand argument for demonstrating the force of Education, but only the bringing out two whelps of the same Bitch, differently brought up, and placing before them a Dish, and a live Hare; the *one*, that had been bred to hunting, ran after the *game*; while the *other*, whose Kennel had been a Kitchen, presently fell a licking the *Platter*. Thus the before-mentioned *Sertorius* made his Soldiers sensible, that Wit, and Contrivance would do more than bare Strength, by setting a couple of men to the plucking of two horses tails; the first pulling at all in one handful, tugged in vain, while the other, though much the weaker, snatching off one by one, soon performed his appointed task.

Instances of like nature are *Minos*, and King *Numa*, both which fooled the people into obedience by a meer cheat, and juggle; the first by pretending he was advised by *Jupiter*, the latter by making the vulgar believe he had the *Goddess*

Ægeria

Ægeria assistant to him in all debates, and transactions. And indeed it is by such wheedles that the common people are best gull'd, and imposed upon.

For farther, what City would ever submit to the rigorous Laws of *Plato*, to the severe injunctions of *Aristotle*, or the more unpracticable Tenets of *Socrates*? No, these would have been too streight, and galling, there not being allowance enough made for the infirmities of the people.

To pass to another head, what was it made the *Decii* so forward to offer themselves up as a sacrifice, for an atonement to the angry Gods, to rescue, and stipulate for, their indebted country? What made *Curtius*, on a like occasion, so desperately to throw away his life, but only *Vain-glory*, that is condemned, and unanimously voted for a main branch of Folly by all wise men? What is more unreasonable, and foppish, (say they) than for any man, out of ambition to some Office, to bow, and scrape, and cringe to the gaping Rabble, to purchase their favour by bribes, and donatives, to have their names cried up in the streets, to be carried about as it were for a fine sight upon the shoulders of the crowd, to have their *effigies* carved in brass, and put up in the Market place for a Monument of their Popularity? Add to this the affectation of new Titles, and distinctive badges of Honour, nay the very Deifying of such as were the most bloudy Tyrants. These are so extremely ridiculous, that there is need of more than one *Democritus* to

laugh at them. And yet hence only have been occasioned those memorable atchievements of Heroes, that have so much employed the pens of many laborious Writers.

It is Folly, that in a several dress governs Cities, appoints Magistrates, and supports Judicatures; and in short, makes the whole course of mans life a meer childrens play, and a worse than Push-pin diversion. The invention of all *Arts* and *Sciences* are likewise owing to the same cause: For what sedentary, thoughtful men would have beat their brains in the search of new, and unheard of Mysteries, if not egg'd on by the bubbling hopes of credit, and reputation? They think a little glittering flash of vain-glory is a sufficient reward for all their sweat, and toil, and tedious drudgery; while they that are supposedly more fooliſh, reap advantage of the others labours.

And now, since I have made good my title to *Valour*, and *Industry*, what if I challenge an equal share of *Wisdom*? How! This (you'l say) is absurd, and contradictory; the East, and West may as soon shake hands, as *Folly*, and *Wisdom* be reconciled. Well, but have a little patience, and I'le warrant you I'le make out my claime. First then, if Wisdom (as must be confest) is no more than a readiness of doing good, and an expedite method of becoming serviceable to the world; to whom does this vertue more properly belong? to the Wise man, who partly out of modesty, partly out of cowardice, can proceed resolutely in no attempt; or to the Fool, that goes hand over head,

head, leaps before he looks, and ſo ventures through the moſt hazardous undertaking without any ſenſe, or proſpect of danger. In the undertaking any enterprize the Wiſe man ſhall run to conſult with his books, and doſe himſelf with poring upon muſty Authors; while the diſpatchful Fool ſhall ruſh bluntly on, and have *done* the buſineſs, while the other is *thinking* of it. For the two greateſt lets, and impediments to the iſſue of any performance, are *Modeſty*, which caſts a miſt before mens eyes, and *Fear*, which makes them ſhrink back, and recede from any propoſal: Both theſe are baniſhed, and caſhiered by Folly, and in their ſtead ſuch a habit of *fool-hardineſs* introduced, as mightily contributes to the ſucceſs of all Enterpriſes.

Farther, if you will have Wiſdom taken in the other ſenſe, of being *A right judgment of things*, you ſhall ſee how ſhort Wiſe men fall of it in this acceptation.

Firſt then it is certain, that all things, like ſo many *Janus's*, carry a double face, or rather bear a falſe aſpect, moſt things being *really* in themſelves far different from what they are in *appearance* to others: ſo as that which at firſt bluſh ſeems alive, is in truth dead; and that again, which appears as dead, at a nearer review proves to be alive: beautiful ſeems ugly; wealthy poor; ſcandalous is thought creditable, proſperous paſſes for unlucky; friendly, for what is moſt oppoſite, and innocent for what is hurtful, and pernicious. In ſhort, if we change the tables, all things are found placed in a quite different poſture from

what just before they appeared to stand in. If this seem too darkly, and unintelligibly expresst, I'le explain it by the familiar instance of some great King, or Prince, whom every one shall suppose to swim in the luxury of wealth, and to be a powerful Lord, and Master; when alas, on the one hand he has poverty of spirit enough to make him a meer beggar, and on the other side he is worse than a Gally slave to his own lusts, and passions.

If I had a mind farther to expatiate, I could enlarge upon several Instances of like nature, but this one may at present suffice.

Well, but what's the meaning (will some say) of all this? Why, observe the application. If any one in a Playhouse be so impertinent, and rude as to rise the Actors of their borrowed cloaths, make them lay down the character assum'd, and force them to returne to their naked selves; would not such a one wholly discompose, and spoil the Entertainment, and would he not deserve to be hiss'd, and thrown stones at, till the pragmatical fool should learn better manners? For by such a disturbance the whole Scene will be altered: such as acted the *men*, will perhaps appear to be *women*; he that was dress't up for a *young* brisk *Lover*, will be found a rough *old fellow*; and he that represented a *King*, will remain but a meer ordinary *Serving man*: the laying things thus open, is a marring all the sport, which consists only in counterfeit, and disguise. Now the world is nothing else but such another *Comedy*, where every one in the Tire-room is first habited, suita-

bly

bly to the part he is to act; and as it is ſucceſſively their turn, out they come on the Stage; where he that now perſonates a *Prince*, ſhall in another part of the ſame Play alter his dreſs, and become a *Beggar*, all things being in a maſque, and particular diſguiſe, or otherwiſe the *Play* could never be preſented. Now if there ſhould ariſe any ſtarcht formal *Don* that would point at the ſeveral Actors, and tell how This, that ſeems a petty God, is in truth worſe than a Brute, being made captive to the tyranny of paſſion; that the other, who bears the character of a King, is indeed the moſt ſlaviſh of Serving-men, in being ſubject to the maſterſhip of Luſt, and Senſuality; that a third, who vaunts ſo much of his Pedigree, is no better than a Baſtard for degenerating from Virtue, which ought to be of greateſt conſideration in Heraldry; and ſo ſhall go on in expoſing all the reſt: would not any one think ſuch a perſon quite frantick, and ripe for Bedlam? For as nothing is more ſilly, than prepoſterous Wiſdom, ſo is there nothing more indiſcreet than an unſeaſonable Reproof: And therefore he is to be houted out of all ſociety, that will not be pliable, conformable, and willing to ſuite his humour with other mens, remembring the law of Clubs, and Meetings, That he who will not do as the reſt, muſt get him out of the company. And it is certainly one great degree of wiſdom, for every one to conſider, that he is but a *Man*, that therefore he ſhould not pitch his ſoaring thoughts beyond the level of *Mortality*, but imp the wings of his towring ambition, and obligingly ſubmit,

and

and condeſcend to the weakneſs of others, it being many times a piece of complaiſance, to go out of the Road for companies ſake. No, (ſay you) this is a grand piece of Folly: True, but yet all our Living is no more than ſuch kind of Fooling: Which though it may ſeem harſh to aſſert, yet it is not ſo ſtrange as true.

For the better making it out, it might perhaps be requiſite to invoke the aid of the *Muſes*, to whom the Poets devoutly apply themſelves upon far more ſlender occaſions. Come then, and aſſiſt ye *Heliconian* Laſſes, while I attempt to prove, that there is no method for an arrival to Wiſdom, and conſequently no track to the goal of Happineſs, without the inſtructions, and directions of Folly.

And here, in the firſt place, it has been already acknowledged, that all the *Paſſions* are liſted under my Regiment, ſince This is reſolved to be the only diſtinction betwixt a Wiſe man, and a Fool, that this latter is governed by Paſſion, the other guided by Reaſon: And therefore the Stoicks look upon Paſſions no other, than as the infection, and malady of the Soul, that diſorders the conſtitution of the whole man, and by putting the ſpirits into a feaveriſh ferment many times occaſion ſome mortal diſtemper: And yet theſe, however decried, are not only our Tutours to inſtruct us toward the attainment of Wiſdom, but e'en bolden us likewiſe, and ſpur us on to a quicker diſpatch of all our undertakings. This I ſuppoſe will be ſtomached by the Stoical *Seneca*, who pretends, that the only Embleme of Wiſdom

dom is, *the man without Paſſion*; whereas the ſuppoſing any perſon to be ſo, is perfectly to unman him, or elſe transforming him into ſome fabulous Deity, that never was, nor ever will be; nay, to ſpeak more plain, it is but the making him a meer *Statue*, immoveable, ſenſleſs, and altogether unactive. And if This be their Wiſe man, let them take him to themſelves, and remove him into *Plato*'s *common-wealth*, the new *Atlantis*, or ſome other like Fairy-land. For who would not hate, and avoid ſuch a perſon, as ſhould be deaf to all the dictates of common Senſe? that ſhould have no more of love, or pity, than a block, or ſtone, that remains heedleſs of all dangers? that thinks he can never miſtake, but can foreſee all contingencies, at the greateſt diſtance, and make proviſion for the worſt preſages? that feeds upon himſelf, and his own thoughts; that monopolizes health, wealth, power, dignity, and all to himſelf; that loves no man, nor is beloved of any; that has the impudence to tax even Divine Providence of ill contrivance, and proudly grudges, nay tramples under foot all other mens reputation. And This is He, that is the Stoicks complete Wiſe man. But prithee, what City would chooſe ſuch a Magiſtrate? What Army would be willing to ſerve under ſuch a Commander? Or what Woman would be content with ſuch a doo-little Husband? Who would invite ſuch a Gueſt? or what Servant would be retained by ſuch a Maſter? The moſt illiterate Mechanick would in all reſpects be a more acceptable man, who would be frolikſome

with

with his wife, free with his friends, jovial at a feast, pliable in converse, and obliging to all company. But I am tired out with this part of my subject, and so must pass to some *other Topicks.*

And now were any one plac'd on that tower, from whence *Jove* is fancied by the Poets to survey the world, he would all around discern how many grievances and calamities our whole life is on every side encompassed with: How unclean our birth, how troublesome our tendance in the cradle, how liable our childhood is to a thousand misfortunes? How toilsome, and full of drudgery our riper years? how heavy, and uncomfortable our old age? and lastly, how unwelcom the unavoidableness of Death? Farther, in every course of life how many wracks there may be of torturing diseases, how many unhappy accidents may casually occur, how many unexpected disasters may arise, and what strange alterations may one moment produce? Not to mention such miseries, as men are mutually the cause of, as Poverty, Imprisonment, Slander, Reproach, Revenge, Treachery, Malice, Cousenage, Deceit; and so many more, as to reckon them all would be as puzling Arithmetick as the numbring of the Sands.

How Mankind became environed with such hard circumstances, or what Deity imposed these Plagues, as a Penance on rebellious Mortals, I am not now at leisure to enquire: but whoever seriously takes them into consideration, he must needs commend the valour of the *Milesian virgins,* who voluntarily kill'd themselves, to get rid

rid of a troubleſome world: And how many wiſe men have took the ſame courſe of becoming their own Executioners? Among whom, not to mention *Diogenes*, *Xenocrates*, *Cato*, *Caſſius*, *Brutus*, and other Heroes, the ſelf-denying *Chiron* is never enough to be commended; who, when he was offered by *Apollo* the priviledge of being exempted from Death, and living on to the worlds end, he refuſed the enticing propoſal as deſervedly, thinking it a puniſhment, rather than reward.

But if all were thus wiſe, you ſee how ſoon the world would be unpeopled, and what need there would be of a ſecond *Prometheus*, toplaiſter up the decayed image of Mankind. I therefore come, and ſtand in this gap of danger, and prevent farther miſchief; partly by ignorance, partly by inadvertence; by the oblivion of whatever would be grating to remember, and the hopes of whatever may be grateful to expect, together palliating all griefs with an intermixture of pleaſure; whereby I make men ſo far from being weary of their lives, that when their thread is ſpun to its full length, they are yet unwilling to die, and mighty hardly brought to take their laſt Farewell of their friends. Thus ſome decrepit old fellows, that look as hollow as the *grave*, into which they are falling, that rattle in the throat at every word they ſpeak, that can eat no meat, but what is tender enough to *ſuck*, that have more hair on their *beard* than they have on their *head*, and go ſtooping toward the *duſt*, they muſt ſhortly return to, whoſe skin ſeems already dreſt into *parchment*, and their

bones ready dried to a *Skeleton*; theſe ſhadows of men ſhall be wonderful ambitious of living longer, and therefore fence off the attaques of Death with all imaginable ſlights, and impoſtures: one ſhall *new die* his grey hairs, for fear their Colour ſhould betray his Age; another ſhall ſpruce himſelf up in a light *Periwig*; a third ſhall repair the loſs of his teeth with an *Ivory ſett*; and a fourth perhaps ſhall fall deeply in *love* with a young Girl and accordingly court her with as much of gaiety, and briskneſs, as the livelieſt Spark in the whole town: and we can't but know, that for an Old man to marry a Young wife without a portion, to be a *cooler* to other mens luſt, is grown ſo common, that it is become the Ala mode of the times. And, what's yet more Comical, you ſhall have ſome wrinkled old women, whoſe very looks are a ſufficient antidote to leachery, that ſhall be canting out, *Ah life is a ſweet thing*, and ſo run a Catterwawling, and hire ſome ſtrong-back't Stallions to recover their almoſt loſt ſenſe of feeling; and to ſet themſelves off the better, they ſhall paint, and dawb their faces, alway ſtand a tricking up themſelves at their Looking-glaſs, go naked neck'd, bare breſted, be tickled at a ſmutty Jeſt, dance among the young Girls, write Love-letters, and do all the other little knacks of decoying hot-blooded Suitours; and in the mean while, however they are laught at, they enjoy themſelves to the full, live up to their hearts deſire, and want for nothing that may complete their happineſs. As for thoſe that think them herein ſo ridiculous, I would have them

give

give an ingenuous anſwer to this one Querie, Whether, if Folly, or Hanging were left to their choice, they had not much rather live like *fools*, than dye like *dogs?* But what matter is it, if theſe things are reſented by the vulgar? their ill word is no injury to Fools, who are either altogether inſenſible of any affront, or at leaſt lay it not much to heart. If they were knockt on the head, or had their brains daſh'd out, they would have ſome cauſe to complain; but alas, ſlander, calumny, and diſgrace, are no other way injurious, than as they are interpreted; nor otherwiſe evil, than as they are thonght to be ſo: What harm is it then, if all perſons deride, and ſcoff you, if you bear but up in your own thoughts, and be your ſelf throughly conceited of your deſerts? And prithee, why ſhould it be thought my ſcandal to be a Fool, ſince the being ſo is one part of our nature, and eſſence; and as ſo, our not being wiſe can no more reaſonably be imputed as a fault, than it would be proper to laugh at a man, becauſe he cannnot fly in the air, like Birds, and Fowls; becauſe he goes not on all four, as beaſts of the field; becauſe he does not wear a pair of viſible horns, as a creſt on his forehead, like Bulls, or Staggs: by the ſame figure we may call a Horſe unhappy, becauſe he was never taught his Grammar; and an Oxe miſerable, for that he never learnt to fence: but ſure as a Horſe, for not knowing a letter, is never the leſs valuable; ſo a Man, for being a Fool, is never the more unfortunate, it being by Nature and Providence ſo ordained for each.

Ay, but (ſay our Patrons of Wiſdom) the know-

ledge of Arts and Sciences is purposely attainable by men, that the defect of *natural* parts may be supplyed by the help of *acquired*: as if it were probable, that Nature, which had been so exact, and curious in the mechanisme of Flowers, Herbs, and Flies, should have bungled most in her masterpiece, and made Man as it were by halves, to be afterward polished, and refined by his own industry, in the attainment of such Sciences as the *Ægyptians* feigned were invented by their God *Theuth*, as a plague sure, and punishment to mankind, being so far from augmenting their happiness, that they do not answer that end they were first designed for, which was, the *improvement of memory*; as *Plato* in his *Phædrus* does wittily observe.

In the first Golden Age of the world there was no need of these perplexities; there was then no other sort of learning, but what was naturally collected from every man's common *sense*, improved by an easie *experience*. What use could there have been of *Grammar*, when all men spoke the same Mother-tongue, and aimed at no higher pitch of Oratory, than barely to be understood by each other? What need of *Logick*, when they were too wise to enter into any dispute? Or what occasion for *Rhetorick*, where no difference arose to require any laborious decision? And as little reason had they to be tied up by any laws, since the dictates of Nature, and common Morality were restraint, and obligation sufficient: And as to all the mysteries of Providence, they made them rather the object of their wonder, than of their curi-

curiosity; and therefore were not so presumptuous as to dive into the depths of Nature, to labour for the solving all *phænomena's* in Astronomy, or to wrack their brain in the splitting of Entities and unfolding the nicest speculations, judging it a crime for any man to aime at what is put beyond the reach of his shallow apprehension.

Thus was *Ignorance*, in the infancy of the world, as much the parent of *Happiness*, as it has been since of *Devotion*: but as soon as the Golden Age began by degrees to degenerate into more drossy metals, then were *Arts* likewise invented; yet, at first, but few in number, and those rarely understood, till in farther process of time the superstition of the *Chaldeans*, and the curiosity of the *Grecians*, spawn'd so many subtleties, that now it is scarce the work of an *age* to be throughly acquainted with all the criticisms in *Grammar* only. And among all the several Arts those are proportionably most esteemed of, that come neerest to Weakness, and Folly. For thus Divines may bite their nails, and Naturalists may blow their fingers, Astrologers may know their own fortune is to be poor, and the Logician may shut his fist, and grasp the wind.

Solus ἰατρὸς ἀνὴρ πολλῶν ἀνπξιΘ ἄλλων,
While all these hard-nam'd fellows cannot make
So great a figure as a single Quack.

And in this profession, those that have most confidence, though least skill, shall be sure of the greatest custom; and indeed this whole Art, as it is now practised, is but one incorporated compound of Craft, and Imposture. Next

Next to the *Physician* comes (He, who perhaps will commence a Suite with me, for not being placed before him, I mean) the *Lawyer*, who is so silly as to be *Ignoramus* to a Proverb, and yet by such are all difficulties resolved, all controversies determined, and all affairs managed, so much to their own advantage, that they get those Estates to themselves, which they are employed to recover for their Clients: while the poor Divine in the mean time shall have the lice crawl upon his thread-bare gown, before, by all his sweat and drudgery, he can get mony enough to purchase a new one. As those Arts therefore are most advantageous to their respective professours, which are fartheſt distant from Wisdom, so are those persons incomparably most happy, that have least to do with any at all, but jog on in the common road of Nature, which will never mislead us, except we voluntarily leap over those boundaries, which she has cautiously set to our finite beings. Nature glitters most in her own plain homely garb, and then gives the greatest lustre, when she is unsullied from all artificial garnish.

Thus if we inquire into the state of all dumb creatures, we shall find those fare best, that are left to Nature's conduct: As to instance in *Bees*, what is more to be admired, than the industry and contrivance of these little Animals? What Architect could ever form so curious a structure, as they give a model of in their unimitable Combs? what kingdom can be governed with better discipline, than they exactly observe in their respective hives? While the *Horse*, by turning a Rebel

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to Nature, and becoming a Slave to Man, undergoes the worſt of tyranny: he is ſometimes ſpurr'd on to battle, ſo long till he draw his guts after him for trapping, and at laſt falls down, and bites the ground inſtead of Graſs; not to mention the penalty of his jaws being curbed, his tail dock'd, his back wrung, his ſides ſpurr-gall'd, his cloſe impriſonment in a Stable, his rapſhin, and fetters when he runs a graſs, and a great many other plagues; which he might have avoided, if he had kept to that firſt ſtation of freedom, which Nature placed him in. How much more deſireable is the unconfined range of *Flies*, and *Birds*, who living by inſtinct, would want nothing to complete their happineſs, if ſome well-imployed *Domitian* would not perſecute the former, nor the fly Fowler lay ſnares, and gins for the intrapping of the other? And if young Birds, before their unfledg'd wings can carry them from their neſts, are caught, and pent up in a Cage, for the being taught to ſing, or whiſtle; all their new *tunes* make not half ſo ſweet Muſick, as their wild *notes*, and natural melody: ſo much does that, which is but rough-drawn by Nature, ſurpaſs, and excell all the additional paint, and varniſh of Art. And we cannot ſure but commend, and admire that *Pythagorean* Cock, which (as *Lucian* relates) had been ſucceſſively a man, a woman, a Prince, a ſubject, a fiſh, a horſe, and a frog; after all his experience he ſumm'd up his judgment in this cenſure, That Man was the moſt wretched, and deplorable of all creatures, all other patiently grazing within the encloſures of Nature, while

Man

Man only broke out, and ſtrayed beyond thoſe ſafer limits, which he was juſtly confined to. And *Gryllus* is to be adjudg'd wiſer than the much counſelling *Ulyſſes*, in as much as when by the inchantment of *Circe* he had been turned into a *Hog*, he would not lay down his ſwiniſhneſs, nor forſake his beloved Stie, to run the peril of a hazardous voyage. For a farther confirmation whereof I have the authority of *Homer*, that Captain of all Poetry, who, as he gives to mankind in general the Epithete of *wretched*, and *unhappy*; ſo he beſtows in particular upon *Ulyſſes* the title of *miſerable*, which he never attributes to *Paris*, *Ajax*, *Achilles*, or any other of the Commanders, and that for this reaſon, becauſe *Ulyſſes* was more crafty, cautious, and *wiſe*, than any of the reſt.

As thoſe therefore fall ſhorteſt of happineſs, that reach higheſt at Wiſdom, meeting with the greater repulſe for ſoaring beyond the boundaries of their nature, and without remembring themſelves to be but men, like the fallen Angels daring to vye with Omnipotence, and Giant-like ſcale Heaven with the Engines of their own Brain; ſo are thoſe moſt exalted in the road of bliſs, that degenerate neareſt into *Brutes*, and quietly diveſt themſelves of all uſe, and exerciſe of Reaſon.

And this we can prove by a familiar inſtance. As namely, can there be any one ſort of men, that enjoy themſelves better, than thoſe which we call Idiots, Changelings, Fools, and Naturals? It may perhaps ſound harſh, but upon due conſideration it will be found abundantly true, that theſe perſons in all circumſtances fare beſt, and live

live moſt comfortably: As firſt, they are void of all fear, which is a very great priviledge to be exempted from; they are troubled with no remorſe, nor pricks of conſcience; they are not frighted with any bug-bear ſtories of another world; they ſtartle not at the fancied appearance of Ghoſts, or apparitions; they are not wrack'd with the dread of impending miſchiefs, nor bandied with the hopes of any expected enjoyments: In ſhort, they are unaſſaulted by all thoſe legions of cares, that war againſt the quiet of Rational ſouls; they are aſhamed of nothing, fear no man, baniſh the uneaſineſs of ambition, envy, and love; and to adde the reverſion of a future happineſs to the enjoyment of a preſent one, they have no ſin neither to anſwer for, *Divines* unanimouſly maintaining, that a groſs, and unavoidable *ignorance* does not only extenuate, and abate from the aggravation, but wholly expiate the guilt of any *immorality*.

Come now then as many of you, as challenge the reſpect of being accounted *wiſe*, ingenuouſly confeſs, how many inſurrections of rebellious thoughts, and pangs of a labouring mind, ye are perpetually thrown, and tortur'd with; reckon up all thoſe inconveniences that you are unavoidably ſubject to, and then tell me, whether *fools*, by being exempted from all theſe embroilments, are not infinitely more free, and happy, than your ſelves? Adde to this, that Fools do not barely laugh, and ſing, and play the good fellow alone to themſelves; but as it is the nature of *good* to be *communicative*, ſo they impart their mirth to

others, by making ſport for the whole company, they are at any time engaged in, as if Providence purpoſely deſign'd them for an Antidote to Melancholly: whereby they make all perſons ſo fond of their ſociety, that they are welcomed to all places, hugg'd, careſs'd, and defended; a liberty given them of ſaying, or doing any thing; ſo well beloved, that none dares to offer them the leaſt injury, nay, the moſt ravenous beaſts of prey will paſs them by untouch'd, as if by inſtinct they were warned, that ſuch innocence ought to receive no hurt. Farther, their converſe is ſo acceptable in the Court of Princes, that few Kings will banquet, walk, or take any other diverſion, without their attendance; nay, and had much rather have their company, than that of their graveſt Counſellors, whom they maintain more for faſhion ſake, than good will; nor is it ſo ſtrange, that theſe fools ſhould be preferr'd before graver Politicians, ſince theſe laſt, by their harſh, ſowr advice, and ill timing the truth, are fit only to put a Prince out of the humour, while the other laugh, and talk, and joque, without any danger of diſobliging.

It is one farther very commendable property of Fools, that they alwayes ſpeak the *truth*, than which there is nothing more noble, and Heroical. For ſo, though *Plato* relate it as a ſentence of *Alcibiades*, That *in the Sea of Drunkenneſs Truth ſwims uppermoſt*, and ſo Wine is the only teller of Truth; yet this character may more juſtly be aſſumed by me, as I can make good from the authority of *Euripides*, who lays down this as an Axi-

Axiome, παῖς παῖδος λέγει, *Children and Fools always speak the truth.* Whatever the fool has in his heart, he betrays it in his face, or, what is more notifying, discovers it by his words: while the wise man, as *Euripides* observes, carries a double tongue; the one to speak what *may* be said, the other what ought to be; the one what *truth*, the other what the *time* requires: whereby he can in a trice so alter his judgment, as to prove that to be now white, which he had just before swore to be black, like the Satyr at his Porrage, blowing hot and cold at the same breath; in his *lips* professing one thing, when in his *heart* he means another.

Farthermore, Princes in their greatest splendour seem upon this account unhappy, in that they miss the advantage of being told the truth, and are shamm'd off by a parcel of insinuating Courtiers, that acquit themselves as Flatterers more than as Friends. But some will perchance object, that Princes do not love to hear the truth, and therefore wise men must be very cautious, how they behave themselves before them, least they should take too great a liberty in speaking what is *true*, rather than what is *acceptable*. This must be confest, Truth indeed is seldom palatable to the ears of Kings, yet Fools have so great a priviledge as to have free leave, not only to speak *bare* truths, but the most *bitter* ones too: so as the same reproof, which had it come from the mouth of a Wise man, would have cost him his head; being blurted out by a Fool, is not only pardoned, but well taken, and rewarded. For

Truth has naturally a mixture of pleasure, if it carry with it nothing of offence to the person whom it is applied to; and the happy knack of ordering it so, is bestowed only on Fools. Tis for the same reason that this sort of men are more fondly beloved by women, who like their tumbling them about, and playing with them, though never so boisterously, pretending to take that only in jest, which they would have to be meant in earnest, as that Sex is very ingenious in palliating, and dissembling the bent of their wanton inclinations.

But to return. An additional happiness of these Fools appears farther in this, That when they have run merrily on to their last stage of life, they neither find any fear, nor feel any pain to *die*, but march contentedly to the other world, where their company sure must be as acceptable, as it was here upon earth.

Let us draw now a *comparison* between the condition of a *Fool*, and that of a *Wise man*, and see how infinitely the one outweighs the other.

Give me any instance then of a man as wise as you can fancy him possible to be, that has spent all his younger years in poring upon books, and trudging after learning; in the pursuit whereof he squanders away the pleasantest time of his life in watching, sweat, and fasting, and in his latter days he never tasts one mouthful of delight, but is alway stingy, poor, dejected, melancholly, burdensom to himself, and unwelcom to others, pale, lean, thin-jaw'd, sickly, contracting by his sedentariness such hurtful distempers, as bring him to

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an untimely death, like Roſes pluckt before they ſhatter. Thus have you the draught of a Wiſe man's happineſs, more the object of a commiſerating Pitty, than of an ambitioning Envy.

But now again come the croaking Stoicks, and tell me in mood, and figure, That nothing is more miſerable, than the being mad: but the being a Fool, is the being mad, therefore there is nothing more miſerable than the being a Fool. Alaſs, this is but a Fallacy, the diſcovery whereof ſolves the force of the whole Syllogiſm. Well then, they argue ſubtilly, tis true, but as *Socrates* in *Plato* makes two *Venus's*, and two *Cupids*, and ſhews how their actions and properties ought not to be confounded; ſo theſe Diſputants, if they had not been *mad* themſelves, ſhould have diſtinguiſhed between a double *Madneſs* in others: and there is certainly a great difference in the nature, as well as in the degrees of them, and they are not both equally ſcandalous: for *Horace* ſeems to take delight in one ſort, when he ſays,

---An me ludit amabilis
Inſania?---

Does welcome Frenzy make me thus miſtake?

And *Plato* in his *Phædron* ranks the madneſs of Poets, of Prophets, and of Lovers, among thoſe properties which conduce to a happy life. And *Virgil*, in his ſixth *Ænead*, gives this Epithete to the induſtrious *Æneas*,

Quod ſi —

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----Inſano juvat indulgere labori?

If you'l proceed to theſe your mad attempts.

And indeed there is a twofold ſort of Madneſs: The one, that which the Furies bring from Hell; thoſe that are herewith poſſeſs'd, are hurried on to wars, and contentions, by an inexhauſtible thirſt of power, and riches, inflamed to ſome infamous, and unlawful luſt, inraged to act the Parricide, ſeduced to become guilty of inceſt, ſacriledge, or ſome other of thoſe crimſon-died crimes; or finally, to be ſo prickt in conſcience, as to be laſh'd, and ſtung with the whips, and ſnakes of grief, and remorſe. But there is another ſort of Madneſs, that proceeds from Folly; ſo far from being any way injurious, or diſtaſtful, that it is throughly good, and deſireable: And this happens, when by a harmleſs miſtake in the judgment of things, the mind is freed from thoſe cares, which would otherwiſe gratingly afflict it; and ſmooth'd over with a content, and ſatisfaction, it could not under other circumſtances ſo happily enjoy. And this is that comfortable Apathy, or inſenſibleneſs, which *Cicero*, in an Epiſtle to his friend *Atticus*, wiſhes himſelf maſter of, that he might the leſs take to heart thoſe inſufferable outrages committed by the tyrannizing Triumvirate, *Lepidus*, *Antonius*, and *Auguſtus*. That *Grecian* likewiſe had a happy time of it, who was ſo frantick, as to ſit a whole day in the empty Theatre laughing, ſhouting, and clapping his hands, as if he had really ſeen ſome pathetick Tragedy acted

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to the life, when indeed all was no more than the ſtrength of imagination, and the efforts of deluſion, while in all other reſpects the ſame perſon behaved himſelf very diſcreetly, was

-----Jucundus amicis,
Comis in uxorem, poſſetque ignoſcere ſervis,
Et ſigno læſe non inſanire lagenæ.

Sweet to his friends, to's wife obliging, kind,
And ſo averſe from a revengeful mind,
That had his ſervants unſeal'd his bottled wine,
He would not fret, nor doggedly repine.

And when by a courſe of Phyſick he was recovered from this phrenſy, he looked upon his *cure* ſo far from a *kindneſs*, that he thus reaſons the caſe with his friends:

---Pol me occidiſtis amici,
Non ſervâſtis,----- cui ſic extorta voluptas,
Et demptus per vim mentis gratiſſimus error.

This Remedy, my friends, is worſe ith' main
Than the Diſeaſe, the Cure augments the pain
My only hopes is a relapſe again.

And certainly they were the more mad of the two, who endeavoured to bereave him of ſo pleaſing a *delirium*, and recall all the aches of his head by diſpelling the miſts of his brain.

I have not yet determined, whether it be proper to include all the defects of ſenſe and underſtanding

ſtanding under the common *genus* of Madneſs. For if any one be ſo ſhort-ſighted, as to take a Mule for an Aſs, or ſo ſhallow-pated, as to admire a paltry Ballad for an elegant Poem, he is not thereupon immediately cenſured as mad: but if any one let not only his Senſes, but his Judgment be impoſed upon in the moſt ordinary common concerns, he ſhall come under the ſcandal of being thought next door to a madman: as ſuppoſe any one ſhould hear an Aſs bray, and ſhould take it for raviſhing Muſick; or if any one, born a beggar, ſhould fancy himſelf as great as a Prince, or the like. But this ſort of Madneſs, if (as is moſt uſual) it be accompanied with pleaſure, brings a great ſatisfaction, both to thoſe who are poſſeſs'd with it themſelves, and thoſe who deride it in others, though they are not both equally frantick. And this *ſpecies* of Madneſs is of larger extent than the world commonly imagines. Thus the whole tribe of Madmen make ſport among themſelves, while one laughs at another; he that is more mad, many times jeering him that is leſs ſo. But indeed the greater each man's Madneſs is, the greater is his happineſs, if it be but ſuch a ſort as proceeds from an exceſs of Folly, which is ſo Epidemical a diſtemper, that it is hard to find any one man ſo uninfected, as not to have ſometimes a fit or two of ſome ſort of Phrenſy. There is only this difference between the ſeveral Patients: He that ſhall take a Broom-ſtick for a ſtreight-bodied woman, is without more adoe ſentenc'd for a Mad-man, becauſe this is ſo ſtrange a blunder as very ſeldom happens; whereas he whoſe

whose wife is a common Jilt, that keeps a ware-house free for all customers, and yet swears she is as chast as an untouch'd Virgin, and huggs himself in his contented mistake, is scarce taken notice of, because he fares no worse than a great many more of his good-natur'd neighbours. Among these are to be ranked such as take an immoderate delight in *Hunting*; and think no Musick comparable to the sounding of Horns, and the yelping of Beagles; and were they to take Physick, would no question think the most sovereign virtues to be in the *Album Græcum* of a dogs-turd: when they have run down their Game, what strange pleasure they take in cutting of it up! Cows, and Sheep may be slaughter'd by common *Butchers*, but what is kill'd in hunting must be broke up by none under a *Gentleman*, who shall throw down his Hat, fall devoutly on his knees, and drawing out a slashing Hanger, (for a common knife is not good enough) after several ceremonies shall dissect all the parts as artificially, as the best skill'd Anatomist; while all that stand round, shall look very intently, and seem to be mightily surprized with the novelty, though they have seen the same an hundred times before; and he that can but dip his finger, and tast of the bloud, shall think his own better'd by it; and though the constant feeding on such diet, does but assimilate them to the nature of those Beasts they eat of, yet they'l swear that Venison is meat for Princes, and that their living upon it makes them as great as Emperours.

Near a kin to these, are such as take a great

fancy for *Building*: They raiſe up, pull down, begin a new, alter the modell, and never reſt, till they run themſelves out of their whole Eſtate, taking up ſuch a compaſs for Buildings, till they leave themſelves not one foot of land to live upon, nor one poor Cottage to ſhelter themſelves from cold, and hunger: and yet all the while are mighty proud of their contrivances, and ſing a ſweet *requiem* to their own happineſs.

To theſe are to be added thoſe plodding *Vertuoſo's*, that plunder the moſt inward receſſes of Nature, for the pillage of a new Invention, and rake over Sea and Land for the turning up ſome hitherto latent myſtery, and are ſo continually tickled with the hopes of ſucceſs, that they ſpare for no coſt, nor pains, but trudge on, and upon a defeat in one attempt couragiouſly tack about to another, and fall upon new experiments, never giving over, till they have *calcined* their whole Eſtate to *aſhes*, and have not money enough left unmelted to purchaſe one Crucible, or Limbeck: And yet after all, they are not ſo much diſcouraged, but that they dream fine things ſtill, and animate others what they can to the like undertakings; nay, when their hopes come to the laſt gaſp, after all their diſappointments they have yet one *Salvo* for their credit, that

In Magnis voluiſſe ſat eſt.

In Great Exploits our bare attempts ſuffice,

And ſo inveigh againſt the ſhortneſs of their life, which

which allows them not time enough to bring their designs to a maturity, and perfection.

Whether *Dice players* may be ſo favourably dealt with, as to be admitted among the reſt is ſcarce yet reſolved upon: but ſure it is hugely vain, and ridiculous, when we ſee ſome perſons ſo devoutly addicted to this diverſion, that at the firſt rattle of the Box their heart ſhakes within them, and keeps conſort with the motion of the Dice: They are egg'd on ſo long with the hopes of always winning, till at laſt in a literal ſenſe they have *thrown away* their whole Eſtate, and made ſhipwrack of all they have, ſcarce eſcaping to ſhore with their own cloaths to their backs, thinking it in the mean while a great piece of religion to be juſt in the payment of their ſtakes, and will cheat any Creditour ſooner than him who truſts them in play: And that poring old men, that cannot tell their Caſt without the help of Spectacles, ſhould be ſweating at the ſame ſport, nay that ſuch decrepit blades, as by the Gout have loſt the uſe of their fingers, ſhould look over, and hire others to throw for them, This indeed is prodigiouſly extravagant, but the conſequence of it ends ſo oft in right down Madneſs, that it ſeems rather to belong to the Furies, than to Folly.

The next to be placed among the regiment of Fools, are ſuch as make a trade of telling, or inquiring after incredible ſtories of *Miracles*, and *Prodigies*: never doubting that a lie will choak them, they'l muſter up a thouſand ſeveral ſtrange relations of Spirits, Ghoſts, Apparitions, Raiſing of the Devil, and ſuch like Bug bears of Superſti-

tion, which the farther they are from being probably true, the more greedily they are ſwallowed, and the more devoutly believed. And theſe abſurdities do not only bring an empty pleaſure, and cheap divertiſement, but they are a good trade, and procure a comfortable income to ſuch Prieſts, and Friers, as by this craft get their gain. To theſe again are nearly related ſuch others, as attribute ſtrange virtues to the *Shrines*, and *Images* of Saints, and Martyrs, and ſo would make their credulous Proſelytes believe, that if they pay their Devotion to St. *Chriſtopher* in the morning, they ſhall be guarded, and ſecured the day following from all dangers, and misfortunes: If Souldiers, when they firſt take arms, ſhall come, and mumble over ſuch a ſett-prayer before the picture of St. *Barbara*, they ſhall return ſafe from all Engagements; or if any pray to *Eraſmus* on ſuch particular holy days, with the ceremony of Wax candles, and other fopperies, he ſhall in a ſhort time be rewarded with a plentiful increaſe of wealth, and riches. The Chriſtians have now their Gigantick St. *George*, as well as the Pagans had their *Hercules*; they paint this Saint on horſe-back, and drawing the horſe in ſplendid trappings, very glorioufly accoutred, they ſcarce refrain in a literal ſenſe from worſhipping the *very Beaſt*.

What ſhall I ſay of ſuch as crie up, and maintain the cheat of *Pardons*, and *Indulgences*? that by theſe compute the time of each Soul's reſidence in Purgatory, and aſſign them a longer or ſhorter continuance, according as they purchaſe more, or fewer of theſe paltry Pardons, and ſalable Exemptions?

emptions? Or what can be ſaid bad enough of ſuch others, as pretend, that by the force of ſuch Magical charms, or by the fumbling over their *beads* in the rehearſal of ſuch and ſuch Petitions, (which ſome Religious Impoſtors invented, either for Diverſion, or, what is more likely, for Advantage) they ſhall procure Riches, Honour, Pleaſure; Health, Long life, a luſty old Age, nay after death, a ſitting at the right hand of our Saviour in his Kingdom; though as to this laſt part of their happineſs, they care not how long it be deferr'd, having ſcarce any appetite toward a taſting the *joys* of *Heaven*, till they are ſurfeited, glutted with, and can no longer reliſh, their *enjoyments* on *Earth*. By this eaſie way of purchaſing Pardons any notorious High way-man, any plundring Souldier, or any Bribe-taking Judge, ſhall diſburſe ſome part of their unjuſt gains, and ſo think all their groſſeſt impieties ſufficiently atoned for; ſo many perjuries, luſts, drunkenneſs, quarrels, bloudſheds, cheats, treacheries, and all ſorts of debaucheries, ſhall all be, as it were, ſtruck a bargain for, and ſuch a contract made, as if they had paid off all *arrears*, and might now begin upon a *new ſcore*.

And what can be more ridiculous, than for ſome others to be confident of going to Heaven, by repeating daily thoſe ſeven verſes out of the *Pſalms*, which the *Devil* taught St. *Bernard*, thinking thereby to have put a trick upon him, but that he was overreacht in his cunning?

Several of theſe fooleries, which are ſo groſs, and abſurd, as I my ſelf am even aſhamed to

own

own, are practiſed, and admired, not only by the vulgar, but by ſuch proficients in Religion, as one might well expect ſhould have more wit.

From the ſame principles of Folly proceeds the cuſtom of each Countrey's challenging their particular *Guardian-Saint*, nay, each Saint has his *diſtinct office* allotted to him, and is accordingly addreſs'd to upon the reſpective occaſions: As one for the Tooth-ach, another to grant an eaſie Delivery in child-birth, a third to help perſons to loſt goods, another to protect Sea-men in a long Voyage, a fifth to guard the Farmers cows, and ſheep; and ſo on; for to rehearſe all inſtances, would be extreamly tedious.

There are ſome more *Catholick Saints* petitioned to upon all occaſions, as more eſpecially the *Virgin Mary*, whoſe blind Devotees think it manners now to place the Mother before the Son.

And of all the Prayers, and Interceſſions, that are made to theſe reſpective Saints, the ſubſtance of them is no more than right-down Folly. Among all the trophies, that for tokens of gratitude are hung upon the walls, and ceilings of Churches, you ſhall find no Reliques preſented as a *Memorandum* of any that were ever cured of Folly, or had been made one dram the wiſer. One perhaps, after a Shipwrack, got ſafe to Shore; another recovered, when he had been run through by an enemy; one, when all his fellow-ſouldiers were kill'd upon the ſpot; as cunningly perhaps, as cowardly made his eſcape from the field; another, while he was a hanging, the rope broke, and ſo he ſaved his neck, and renewed his Licenſe for

pra-

practising his old trade of thieving. Another broke Jail, and got loose; a Patient, against his Physitian's will, recovered of a dangerous Feaver; another drank poyson, which putting him into a violent loosness, did his body more good, than hurt, to the great grief of his wife, who hoped upon this occasion to have become a joyful widow: Another had his waggon overturned, and yet none of his horses lamed: Another had caught a grievous fall, and yet recovered from the bruise: Another had been tampering with his neighbours wife, and escaped very narrowly from being catcht by the enraged Cuckold in the very act. After all these acknowledgments of Escapes from such singular dangers, there is none (as I have before intimated) that returns thanks for being freed from Folly; Folly being so sweet, and luscious, that it is rather sued for, as a happiness, than deprecated as a punishment. But why should I launch out into so wide a sea of superstitions?

Non mihi si linguæ centum sint, oraque centum,
Ferrea vox, omnes fatuorum evolvere formas,
Omnia stultitiæ percurrere nomina possim.

Had I as many tongues as *Argus* eyes,
Briareus hands, they all would not suffice
Folly in all her shapes t' epitomise.

Almost all Christians being wretchedly enslaved to blindness, and ignorance, which the *Priests* are so far from preventing, or removing, that they blacken

blacken the darkneſs, and promote the deluſion; wiſely foreſeeing, that the people (like cows, which never give down their milk ſo well, as when they are gently ſtroked) would part with leſs, if they knew more, their *bounty* proceeding only from a miſtake of *charity*. Now if any grave, wiſe man ſhould ſtand up, and unſeaſonably ſpeak the truth, telling every one, That a pious Life is the only way of ſecuring a happy Death; that the beſt title to a *Pardon* of our Sins, is purchaſed by a hearty *Abhorrence* of our Guilt, and ſincere reſolutions of *Amendment*; that the beſt *devotion*, which can be paid to any *Saints*, is to *imitate* them in their exemplary life: if he ſhould proceed thus to inform them of their ſeveral miſtakes, there would be quite another eſtimate put upon Tears, Watchings, Maſſes, Faſtings, and other ſeverities, which before were ſo much prized, as perſons will now be vext to looſe that ſatisfaction, they formerly found in them.

In the ſame predicament of Fools are to be ranked ſuch, as while they are yet living, and in good health, take ſo great care how they ſhall be *buried* when they dye, that they ſolemnly appoint how many Torches, how many Scutcheons, how many Gloves to be given, and how many Mourners they will have at their Funeral; as if they thought They themſelves in their Coffins could be ſenſible of what reſpect was paid to their Corps, or as if they doubted they ſhould reſt a whit the leſs quiet in the Grave, if they were with leſs ſtate, and pomp interr'd.

Now, though I am in ſo great haſt, as I would not

not willingly be ſtopt, or detained, yet I cannot paſs by without beſtowing ſome remarques upon another ſort of Fools; who, though their firſt Deſcent was perhaps no better than from a Tapſter, or Tinker, yet highly value themſelves upon their *Birth*, and *Parentage*. One fetches his pedigree from *Æneas*, another from *Brute*, a third from King *Arthur*: They hang up their Anceſtours worm-eaten pictures as Records of Antiquity, and keep a long liſt of their Predeceſſors, with an account of all their Offices, and Titles, while they themſelves are but Tranſcripts of their Fore-fathers dumb Statues, and degenerate even into thoſe very *Beaſts*, which they carry in their Coat of Arms, as *Enſigns* of their Nobility: And yet by a ſtrong preſumption of their Birth, and Quality, they live not only the moſt pleaſant, and unconcerned themſelves, but there are not wanting others too, who cry up theſe Brutes almoſt equal to the Gods. But why ſhould I dwell upon one or two inſtances of Folly, when there are ſo many of like nature? *Conceitedneſs*, and *Self-love*, making many by ſtrength of fancie believe themſelves happy, when otherwiſe they are really wretched, and deſpicable. Thus the moſt Ape-fac'd, uglieſt fellow in the the whole town, ſhall think himſelf a mirrour of Beauty: Another ſhall be ſo proud of his parts, that if he can but mark out a Triangle with a pair of Compaſſes, he thinks he has maſtred all the difficulties of *Geometry*, and could out-doe *Euclid* himſelf. A third ſhall admire himſelf for a raviſhing Muſitian, though he have no more skill in the handling of any Inſtrument,

than a *Pig* playing on the *Organs*: And another, that rattles in the throat, as hoarſe as a Cock crows, ſhall be proud of his voice, and think he ſings like any *Nightingale*

There is another very pleaſant ſort of Madneſs, whereby perſons aſſume to *themſelves*, whatever of accompliſhment they diſcern in *others*. Thus the happy *rich Churl* in *Seneca*, who had ſo ſhort a memory, as he could not tell the leaſt ſtory without a ſervants ſtanding by to prompt him, and was at the ſame time ſo weak, as he could ſcarce go upright; yet he thought he might adventure to accept a challenge to a Duell, becauſe he kept at home ſome luſty ſturdy fellows, whoſe ſtrength he relied upon inſtead of his own.

It is almoſt needleſs to inſiſt upon the ſeveral *Profeſſours* of Arts, and Sciences, who are all ſo egregiouſly conceited, that they would ſooner give up their Title to an eſtate in Lands, than part with the Reverſion of their Wits: Among Theſe, more eſpecially Stage players, Muſitians, Oratours, and Poets, each of which, the more of Duncery they have, the more of Pride, and the leſs their Deſerts be, the greater is their Ambition: And how notoriouſly ſoever dull they be, they meet yet with their Admirers; nay, the more ſilly they are, the higher they are extoll'd: Folly (as we have before intimated) never failing of reſpect, and eſteem. If therefore every one, the more ignorant he is, the greater ſatisfaction he is to himſelf, and the more commended by others, to what purpoſe is it to ſweat, and toil in the purſuit of true Learning, which ſhall coſt ſo many

gripes,

gripes, and pangs of the Brain to acquire; and when obtained, ſhall only make the laborious Student more uneaſie to himſelf, and leſs acceptable to others?

As Nature in her diſpenſations of Conceitedneſs has dealt with *private perſons*, ſo has ſhe given a particular ſmatch of Self-love to each *Country*, and *Nation*. Upon this account it is, that the *Engliſh* challenge the prerogative of having the moſt handſom Women, of the being moſt accompliſhed in the skill of Muſick, and of keeping the beſt Tables: The *Scotch* brag of their Gentility, and pretend the Genius of their native Soil inclines them to be good Diſputants: The *French* think themſelves remarkable for Complaiſance, and good Breeding: The *Sorboniſts* of *Paris* pretend before any others to have made the greateſt proficiency in Polemick Divinity: The *Italians* value Themſelves for Learning, and Eloquence, and like the *Grecians* of old, account all the world Barbarians in reſpect of themſelves; to which piece of vanity the inhabitants of *Rome* are more eſpecially addicted, pretending themſelves to be owners of all thoſe Heroick virtues, which their City ſo many ages ſince was deſervedly famous for. The *Venetians* ſtand upon their Birth, and Pedigree. The *Grecians* pride themſelves in having been the firſt inventers of moſt Arts, and in their Country being famed for the product of ſo many eminent Philoſophers. The *Turks*, and all the other Refuſe of *Mahometiſme*, pretend they profeſs the only true Religion, and laugh at all Chriſtians for ſuperſtitious, narrow-ſoul'd fools. The

Jews to this day expect their *Messias*, as devoutly, as they believe in their first Prophet *Moses*. The *Spaniards* challenge the repute of being accounted good Souldiers: and the *Germans* are noted for their tall, proper stature, and for their skill in Magick. But not to mention any more, I suppose you are already convinced, how great an improvement, and addition to the happiness of humane Life is occasioned by Self-love: Next step to which is *Flattery*; for as Self-love is nothing but the coquesing up of *our selves*, so the same currying and humouring of *others*, is termed Flattery.

Flattery, it is true, is now looked upon as a scandalous name, but it is by such only, as mind *words* more than *things*. They are prejudiced against it upon this account, because they suppose it justles out all Truth, and Sincerity: whereas indeed its property is quite contrary, as appears from the examples of several brute creatures: What is more fawning than a *Spaniel*, and yet what is more faithful to his Master? what is more fond, and loving than a tame *Squirrel*, and yet what is more sporting, and inoffensive? This little frisquing creature is kept up in a cage to play withall, while Lions, Tigers, Leopards, and such other savage Emblems of rapine, and cruelty, are shewn only for state, and rarity, and otherwise yield no pleasure to their respective keepers.

There is indeed a pernicious destructive sort of *Flattery*, wherewith Rookers, and Sharkes work their several ends upon such as they can make a prey of, by decoying them into traps, and snares, be-

beyond recovery: But that which is the effect of Folly, is of a much different nature; It proceeds from a ſoftneſs of ſpirit, and a flexibleneſs of good humour, and comes far nearer to virtue, than that other extream of Friendſhip, namely a ſtiff, ſowr, dogged moroſeneſs: It refreſhes our minds when tired, enlivens them when melancholly, reinforces them when languiſhing, invigorates them when heavy, recovers them when ſick, and pacifies them when rebellious: It puts us in a method how to procure Friends, and how to keep them; It entices children to ſwallow the bitter rudiments of Learning; It gives a new ferment to the almoſt ſtagnated ſouls of old men; It both reproves, and inſtructs Princes without offence, under the maſque of commendation: In ſhort, it makes every man fond, and indulgent of himſelf, which is indeed no ſmall part of each mans happineſs, and at the ſame time renders him obliging, and complaiſant in all company, where it is pleaſant to ſee how the Aſſes rub, and ſcratch one another. This again is a great accompliſhment to an Oratour, a greater to a Phyſitian, and the only one to a Poet: In fine, it is the beſt ſweetner to all afflictions, and gives a true relliſh to the otherwiſe inſipid enjoyments of our whole life. Ay but (ſay you) to *Flatter*, is to *Deceive*; and to Deceive, is very harſh, and hurtful: No, rather juſt contrary; nothing is more welcome, and bewitching, than the *being deceived*. They are much to be blamed for an undiſtinguiſhing head, that make a judgment of things according to what they are in *themſelves*, when their whole nature conſiſts barely

barely in the *opinions* that are had of them. For all ſublunary matters are inveloped in ſuch a cloud of obſcurity, that the ſhort-ſightedneſs of humane underſtanding cannot prie through, and arrive to any comprehenſive knowledge of them: Hence the Sect of *Academick* Philoſophers have modeſtly reſolved, that All things being no more than *Probable*, Nothing can be known as *Certain*; or if there could, yet would it but interrupt, and abate from the pleaſure of a more happy *Ignorance*. Finally, our ſouls are ſo faſhioned and moulded, that they are ſooner captivated by *Appearances*, than by *Real Truths*; of which, if any one would demand an example, he may find a very familiar one in *Churches*, where, if what is delivered from the Pulpit be a grave, ſolid, rational diſcourſe, all the congregation grow weary, and fall aſleep, till their patience be releaſed; whereas if the *Preacher* (pardon the impropriety of the word, the *Prater* I would have ſaid) be zealous in his thumps of the cuſhion, and antick geſtures, and ſpend his Glaſs in the telling of pleaſant ſtories, his *Beloved* ſhall then ſtand up, tuck their hair behind their ears, and be very devoutly attentive. So among the *Saints*, Thoſe are moſt reſorted to, who are moſt Romantick, and fabulous: As for inſtance, a Poetick St. *George*, a St. *Chriſtopher*, or a St. *Barbara*, ſhall be oftner pray'd to, than St. *Peter*, St. *Paul*, nay perhaps than *Chriſt* himſelf: But This, it is poſſible, may more properly be referr'd to another place.

In the mean while obſerve, what a *cheap* purchaſe of *happineſs* is made by the ſtrength of *fancy*.

For

For whereas many things, even of inconſiderable value, would coſt a great deal of pains, and perhaps pelf, to procure; *Opinion* ſpares charges, and yet gives us them in as ample a manner by *conceit*, as if we poſſeſs'd them in *reality*. Thus he who feeds on ſuch a *ſtinking* diſh of Fiſh, as another muſt hold his noſe at a yards diſtance from; yet if he feed heartily, and reliſh them palatably, they are to him as good, as if they were *freſh* caught: whereas on the other hand, if any one be invited to never ſo dainty a Joul of *Sturgeon*, if it go againſt his ſtomach to eat any, he may ſit a hungry, and bite his *nails* with greater appetite, than his *victuals*. If a woman be never ſo ugly, and nauſeous, yet if her husband can but *think* her handſome, it is all one to him, as if ſhe really *were* ſo: If any man have never ſo ordinary and ſmutty a *draught*, yet if he admires the excellency of it, and can ſuppoſe it to have been drawn by ſome old *Apelles*, or modern *Vandike*, he is as proud of it, as if it had really been done by one of their hands. I knew a friend of mine, that preſented his Bride with ſeveral falſe, and counterfeit *Stones*, making her believe, that they were right *Jewels*, and coſt him ſo many hundred thouſand crowns: under this miſtake the poor woman was as choice of *Pebbles*, and *painted glaſs*, as if they had been ſo many natural *Rubies*, and *Diamonds*, while the ſubtle husband ſav'd a great deal in his pocket, and yet made his wife as well pleaſed, as if he had been at ten hundred times the coſt. What difference is there between Them, that in the darkeſt dungeon can with a *Platonick* brain ſurvey the whole

whole world in Idea, and Him that ſtands in the open air, and takes a leſs deluding proſpect of the Univerſe? If the *Beggar* in *Lucian*, that *dreamt* he was a Prince, had never *wak'd*, his *imaginary* Kingdom had been as great, as a *real* one. Between him therefore that *truly* is Happy, and him that *thinks* himſelf ſo, there is no perceivable diſtinction; or if any, the Fool has the better of it: Firſt, becauſe his happineſs coſts him leſs, ſtanding him only in the price of a *ſingle thought*; and then, ſecondly, becauſe he has more fellow-companions, and partakers of his good fortune: for no enjoyment is comfortable, where the benefit is not imparted to others; nor is any one ſtation of life deſireable, where we can have no converſe with perſons of the ſame condition with our ſelves: and yet This is the hard fate of Wiſe men, who are grown ſo ſcarce, that like *Phenixes*, they appear but *one* in an Age. The *Grecians*, it is true, reckoned up *ſeven* within the narrow precincts of their own country; yet I believe, were they to caſt up their accounts anew, they would not find a half, nay not a third part of *one* in a far larger extent.

Farther, when among the ſeveral good properties of *Bacchus*, This is look'd upon as the chief, namely, that he drowns the cares, and anxieties of the mind, though it be indeed but for a ſhort while; for after a ſmall *knap*, when our brains are a little ſettled, they all return to their former corrodings: How much greater is the more durable advantage which I bring? while by one uninterrupted fitt of being *drunk* in *con-*

ceit,

ce't, I perpetually cajole the mind with riots, revells, and all the exceſs, and energy of Joy.

Add to this, that I am ſo *communicative*, and bountiful, as to let no one particular perſon paſs without ſome token of my favour: whereas other Deities beſtow their gifts ſparingly to their *Elect* only. *Bacchus* has not thought fit, that every Soil ſhould bear the ſame Juice-yielding grape: *Venus* has not given to all a like portion of beauty: *Mercury* endows but few with the knack of an accompliſhed Eloquence: *Hercules* gives not to all the ſame meaſure of Wealth, and Riches: *Jupiter* has ordained but a few to be born to a Kingdom: *Mars* in battel gives the compleat victory but to one party, nay he often makes them both looſers: *Apollo* does not anſwer the expectation of all that conſult his Oracles: *Jove* oft thunders: *Phœbus* ſometimes ſhoots the plague, or ſome other infection, at the point of his Darts: and *Neptune* ſwallows down more, than he bears up: Not to mention their *Ve-Jupiters*, their *Pluto's*, their *Ate Goddeſs of Loſs*, their *evil Genius's*, and ſuch other Monſters of Divinity, as had more of the *Hangman* than the *God* in them, and were worſhipped only to deprecate that hurt, which uſed to be inflicted by them: I ſay, not to mention Theſe, I am that high, and mighty *Goddeſs*, whoſe *liberality* is of as large an extent, as her *omnipotence*: I give to all that ask; I never appear ſullen, nor out of humour, nor ever demand any atonement, or ſatisfaction for the omiſſion of any ceremonious punctilio in my Worſhip: I do not ſtorm, or rage, if Mortals, in their addreſſes to the other Gods,

pass me by unregarded, without the acknowledgment of any respect, or application: Whereas all the other Gods are so scrupulous, and exact, that it often proves less dangerous manfully to despise them, than sneakingly to attempt the difficulty of pleasing them. Thus some men are of that captious, froward humour, that a man had better be wholly *strangers* to them, than never so intimate *friends*.

Well, but there are none (say you) build any *Altars*, or dedicate any *Temple* to Folly. I admire (as I have before intimated) that the world should be so wretchedly ungrateful. But I am so good-natur'd, as to pass by, and pardon this seeming affront, though indeed the charge thereof, as unnecessary, may well be saved, For to what purpose should I demand the *sacrifice* of Frankincense, Cakes, Goats, and Swine, since all persons every where pay me that more acceptable *service*, which all Divines agree to be more effectuall, and meritorious, namely, an *imitation* of my communicable Attributes? I do not therefore any way envy *Diana*, for having her Altars bedewed with humane bloud: I think my self then most religiously adored, when my respective *Devotees* (as is their usual custom) conform themselves to my practice, transcribe my pattern, and so live the *copy* of Me their *Original*. And truly this pious Devotion is not so much in use among Christians, as is much to be wished it were: For how many zealous *Votaries* are there, that pay so profound a respect to the *Virgin Mary*, as to place *lighted* Tapers even at *Noon-day* upon her Altars? And yet how few

of

of them copy after her untouch'd chaſtity, her modeſty, and her other commendable virtues, in the imitation whereof conſiſts the trueſt eſteem of *Divine worſhip*? Farther, why ſhould I deſire a *Temple*, ſince the whole world is but one ample continued *Quire*, entirely dedicated to my uſe, and ſervice? Nor do I want *Worſhippers* at any place, where the Earth wants not *Inhabitants*. And as to the manner of my Worſhip, I am not yet ſo irrecoverably fooliſh, as to be prayed to by *proxy*, and to have my honour intermediately beſtowed upon ſenſleſs *images*, and *pictures*, which quite ſubvert the true end of Religion; while the unwary Supplicants ſeldome diſtinguiſh betwixt the *things themſelves*, and the *objects* they *repreſent*. The ſame reſpect in the mean while is paid to me in a more legitimate manner; for to Me there are as many Statues erected, as there are moving Fabricks of Mortality; every perſon, even againſt his own will, carrying the image of Me; *i.e.* the ſignal of Folly inſtamped on his countenance. I have not therefore the leaſt tempting inducement to envy the more ſeeming ſtate, and ſplendour of the other Gods, who are worſhipped at ſett *times*, and *places*; as *Phœbus* at *Rhodes*, *Venus* in her *Cyprian* Iſle, *Juno* in the City *Argos*, *Minerva* at *Athens*, *Jupiter* on the hill *Olympus*, *Neptune* at *Tarentum*, and *Priapus* in the town of *Lampſacum*; while, my *Worſhip* extending as far as my *Influence*, the whole World is my *One Altar*, wherebn the moſt valuable Incenſe, and Sacrifice is perpetually offered up.

But leſt I ſhould ſeem to ſpeak this with more

of confidence than truth, let us take a nearer view of the mode of mens Lives, whereby it will be rendred more apparently evident, what Largesses I every where bestow, and how much I am respected, and esteem'd of persons, from the highest to the basest quality. For the proof whereof, it being too tedious to insist upon each particular, I shall only mention such in general, as are most worthy the remarque, from which by analogy we may easily judge of the remainder. And indeed to what purpose would it be singly to recount the commonalty, and rabble of mankind, who beyond all question are entirely on my side? And for a token of their vassalage do wear my livery in so many older shapes, and more newly invented modes of Folly, that the lungs of a thousand *Democritus's* would never hold out to such a laughter, as this subject would excite; and to these thousand must be superadded one more, to laugh at them, as much as They do at the other.

It is indeed almost incredible to relate, what mirth, what sport, what diversion, the groveling inhabitants here on Earth give to the above-seated Gods in Heaven: For these exalted Deities spend their fasting sober hours in listning to those Petitions that are offered up, and in succouring such as they are appealed to for redress; but when they are a little entred at a glass of Nectar, they then throw off all serious concerns, and go, and place themselves on the ascent of some Promontory in Heaven, and from thence survey the little mole-hill of Earth. And trust

me,

me, there cannot be a more delightſome proſpect, than to view ſuch a Theatre ſo ſtufft, and cramm'd with ſwarms of Fools. One falls deſperately in *Love*, and the more he is ſlighted, the more does his Spaniel-like paſſion increaſe: Another is wedded to *Wealth*, rather than to a *Wife*: A third *pimps* for his own Spouſe, and is content to be a Cuckold, ſo he may wear his horns guilt: A fourth is haunted with a *jealouſie* of his viſiting Neighbous: Another ſobs, and roars, and plays the child for the *death* of a Friend, or Relation; and leaſt his own tears ſhould not riſe high enough to expreſs the torrent of his grief, he hires other mourners to accompany the Corps to the grave, and ſing its *Requiem* in ſighs, and lamentations: Another hypocritically weeps at the *funeral* of one, whoſe death at heart he rejoyces for: Here a *gluttonous* Cormorant, whatever he can ſcrape up, thruſts all into his guts, to pacifie the cryings of a hungry ſtomach: There a *lazy* wretch ſits yawning, and ſtretching, and thinks nothing ſo deſirable as ſleep, and idleneſs: Some are extreamly induſtrious in *other mens* buſineſs, and ſottiſhly neglectful of their *own*: Some think themſelves rich, becauſe their *credit* is great, though they can never pay till they break, and compound for their debts. One is ſo covetous, that he *lives Poor* to *dye Rich*. One for a little uncertain gain will venture croſs the roughelt Seas, and expoſe his *life* for the purchaſe of a *livelyhood*: Another will depend on the plunders of *War*, rather than on the honeſt gains of *Peace*. Some will cloſe with, and humour ſuch warm

warm old Blades as have a good Estate, and no children of their own to bestow it upon: Others practise the same art of *wheedling* upon good old women, that have hoarded, and coffer'd up more bags, than they know how to dispose of; both of these sly Flatterers make fine sport for the Gods, when they are beat at their own weapons, and (as oft happens) are gull'd by those very persons they intended to make a prey of. There is another sort of base Scoundrels in Gentility, such scraping merchants, who although for the better vent of their commodities they lye, swear, cheat, and practise all the intrigues of dishonesty; yet think themselves no way inferiour to persons of the highest quality, only because they have raked together a plentiful Estate; and there are not wanting such insinuating *hangers on*, as shall caress, and compliment them with the greatest respect, in hopes to go *snacks* in some of their dishonest Gains. There are others so infected with the Philosophical Paradox of banishing *Propriety*, and having all things in *common*, that they make no conscience of fastning on, and purloyning whatever they can get, and converting it to their own use, and possession. There are some, who are rich only in *wishes*; and yet, while they barely dream of vast mountains of wealth, they are as happy, as if their imaginary *fancies* commenc'd real *truths*. Some put on the *best side* outermost, and starve themselves at *home*, to appear gay, and splendid *abroad*. One, with an *open-handed* freedome, spends all he lays his fingers on; another, with a *Logick-fisted* gripingness, catches at, and grasps

graſps all he can come within the reach of. One apes it about in the *ſtreets*, to court popularity; another conſults his eaſe, and ſticks to the *confinement* of a Chimney-corner. Many others are tugging hard at *Law* for a triſle, and drive on an endleſs Suite, only to enrich a deferring Judge, or a knaviſh Advocate. One is for *new-modelling* a ſettled Government; another is for ſome notable Heroical attempt; and a third by all means muſt travail a *Pilgrim* to *Rome*, *Jeruſalem*, or ſome Shrine of a Saint elſewhere, though he have no other buſineſs than the paying of a formal impertinent Viſit, leaving his wife, and children to *faſt*, while he himſelf forſooth is gone to *pray*. In ſhort if (as *Lucian* fancies *Menippus* to have done heretofore) any man could now again look down from the Orb of the *Moon*, he would ſee thick ſwarms, as it were, of Flies, and Gnats, that were quarrelling with each other, juſtling, fighting, fluttring, skipping, playing, juſt new produced, ſoon after decaying, and then immediately vaniſhing: And it can ſcarce be thought how many tumults, and tragedies, ſo inconſiderate a creature as *Man* does give occaſion to, and that in ſo ſhort a ſpace, as the ſmall Span of Life; ſubject to ſo many caſualties, that the Sword, Peſtilence, and other Epidemick accidents, ſhall many times ſweep away whole thouſands at a bruſh.

But hold, I ſhould but expoſe my ſelf too far, and incur the guilt of being roundly laught at, if I proceed to enumerate the ſeveral kinds of the folly of the vulgar: I ſhall confine therefore my fol-

following discourse only to such as challenge the *repute* of Wisdom, and seemingly pass for men of the soundest intellectuals. Among whom the *Grammarians* present themselves in the front; a sort of men, who would be the most miserable, the most slavish, and the most hateful of all persons, if I did not some way alleviate the pressures, and miseries of their Profession, by blessing them with a bewitching sort of Madness: For they are not only liable to those *five Curses*, which they so oft recite from the first five verses of *Homer*, but to five hundred more of a worse nature: As always damn'd to thirst, and hunger, to be choak'd with dust in their unsweep't Schools, (*Schools* shall I term them, or rather *Elaboratories*, nay Bridewels, and houses of Correction) to wear out themselves in fret, and drudgery; to be deafned with the noise of gaping Boys, and in short, to be stifled with heat, and stench: And yet they chearfully dispense with all these inconveniences, and by the help of a fond conceit, think themselves as happy as any then living; taking a great pride, and delight in frowning, and looking big upon the trembling Urchins, in boxing, slashing, striking with the *ferula*, and in the exercise of all their other methods of tyranny, while thus lording it over a parcel of young, weak chitts, they imitate the *Cuman* Ass, and think themselves as stately as a Lion, that domineers over all the inferiour herd: Elevated with this conceit, they can hold filth, and nastiness, to be an ornament; can reconcile their nose to the most intolerable smells; and finally, think their wretched slavery the most

arbi-

arbitrary Kingdom, which they would not exchange for the Jurisdiction of the most Sovereign Potentate: And they are yet more happy by a strong perswasion of their own parts, and abilities; for thus, when their employment is only to rehearse silly stories, and Poetical fictions, they'l yet think themselves wiser than the best experienc'd Philosopher; nay, they have an art of making ordinary people, such as their School-boys fond parents, to think them as considerable as their own Pride has made them: Add hereunto this other sort of ravishing pleasure; when any of them has found out who was the mother of *Anchises*, or has lighted upon some old unusual word, such as *Bubsequa*, *Bovinator*, *Manticulator*, or other like obsolete *cramp terms*, or can, after a great deal of poring, spell out the Inscription of some batter'd Monument. Lord! What joy, what triumph, what congratulating their success? as if they had conquered *Africa*, or taken *Babylon* the Great. When they recite some of their frothy, bombast Verses, if any happen to admire them, they are presently flush'd with the least hint of commendation, and devoutly thank *Pythagoras* for his grateful *Hypothesis*, whereby they are now become actuated with a descent of *Virgil's* Poetick Soul. Nor is any divertisment more pleasant, than when they meet to flatter, and curry one another; yet they are so *critical*, that if any one hap to be guilty of the least slip, or seeming blunder, another shall presently correct him for it, and then to't they go in a tongue-combat, with all the fervour, spleen, and eagerness imagi-

nable. May *Priſcian* himſelf be my *enemy*, if what I am now going to ſay, be not exactly true. I knew an old Sophiſter, that was a Grecian, a Latiniſt, a Mathematician, a Philoſopher, a Muſitian, and all to the utmoſt perfection, who after threeſcore years experience in the world had ſpent the laſt twenty of them only in drudging to conquer the Criticiſms of Grammar, and made it the chief part of his prayers, that his life might be ſo long ſpared, till he had learnt how rightly to diſtinguiſh betwixt the Eight parts of Speech, which no Grammarian, whether Greek, or Latin, had yet accurately done. If any chance to have placed that as a *Conjunction*, which ought to have been uſed as an *Adverb*, it is a ſufficient alarm to raiſe a war, for the doing juſtice to the injur'd word. And ſince there have been as many ſeveral Grammers, as particular Grammarians, (nay more, for *Aldus* alone wrot five diſtinct Grammers for his own ſhare) the Schoolmaſter muſt be obliged to conſult them all, ſparing for no time, nor trouble, though never ſo great, leaſt he ſhould be otherwiſe poſed in any unobſerved Criticiſm, and ſo by an irreparable diſgrace looſe the reward of all his toil. It is indifferent to me, whither you call this Folly, or Madneſs, ſince you muſt needs confeſs, that it is by my influence theſe School-tyrants, though in never ſo deſpicable a condition, are ſo happy in their own thoughts, that they would not change fortunes with the moſt illuſtrious Sophy of *Perſia*.

The *Poets*, however ſomewhat leſs beholden

to me, own a profeſſed dependance on me, being a ſort of lawleſs blades, that by preſcription claim a *Licenſe* to a Proverb; while the whole intent of their profeſſion is only to ſmooth up, and tickle the ears of fools, and that by meer toys, and fabulous ſhamms, with which (however ridiculous) they are ſo bolſtred up in an aiery imagination, as to promiſe themſelves an everlaſting name, and promiſe by their balderdaſh at the ſame time to celebrate the never dying memory of others. To theſe rapturous wits Self-love, and Flattery are never-failing Attendants, nor do any prove more zealous, or conſtant Devotees to Folly.

The *Rhetoricians* likewiſe, though they are ambitious of being rank'd among the Philoſophers, yet are apparently of my Faction, as appears among other arguments by this more eſpecially; In that among their ſeveral Topicks of compleating the art of Oratory, they all particularly inſiſt upon the knack of *Jeſting*, which is one *ſpecies* of Folly; as is evident from the books of Oratory wrot to *Herennius*, put among *Cicero*'s works, but done by ſome other unknown Author; and in *Quintilian* that great Maſter of Eloquence, there is one large Chapter ſpent in preſcribing the methods of raiſing *Laughter*: In ſhort, they may well attribute a great efficacy to Folly, ſince on any argument they can many times by a ſlight *laugh over* what they could never ſeriouſly *confute*.

Of the ſame gang are thoſe ſcribling Fops, who think to eternize their memory by ſetting up for

Authors: Among which, though they are All some way indebted to me, yet are those more especially so, who spoil paper in blotting it with meer trifles, and impertinences. For as to those graver Drudgers to the *Press*, that write learnedly beyond the reach of an ordinary Reader, who durst submit their labours to the review of the most severe Critick, These are not so liable to be envied for their honour, as to be pitied for their sweat, and slavery; they make additions, alterations, blot out, write anew, amend, interline, turn it upside down, and yet can never please their fickle judgment, but that they shall dislike the next hour what they penn'd the former; and all this to purchase the aiery commendations of a few understanding Readers, which at most is but a poor reward for all their fastings, watchings, confinements, and brain-breaking tortures of Invention: add to this the impairing of their health, the weakning of their constitution, their contracting sore eyes, or perhaps turning stark blind; their poverty, their envy, their debarment from all pleasures, their hastning on old age, their untimely death, and what other inconveniences of a like, or worse nature can be thought upon: And yet the recompence for all this severe penance is at best no more, than a mouthful or two of frothy *Praise*. These, as they are more laborious, so are they less happy than those other *Hackney-scribblers*, which I first mentioned, who never stand much to consider, but write what comes next at a venture; knowing, that the more silly their compositures are, the more they will be

bought

bought up by the greater number of Readers, who are Fools, and Blockheads: And if they hap to be condemn'd by some few judicious persons, it is an easie matter by clamour to drown their censure, and to silence them by urging the more numerous commendations of others. They are yet the wisest, who *transcribe* whole discourses from others, and then *reprint* them as their own; by doing so they make a cheap, and easie seisure to themselves of that reputation, which cost the first Author so much time, and trouble to procure: If they are at any time prick'd a little in conscience, for fear of discovery, they feed themselves however with this hope, that if they be at last found *Plagiaries*, yet at least for some time they shall have the credit of passing for the genuine Authors. It is pleasant to see how all these several Writers are puff'd up with the least blast of applause, especially if they come to the honour of being pointed at, as they walk along the streets, when their several *Pieces* are laid open upon every Book seller's Stall, when their *Names* are emboss'd in a different character upon the Title-page, sometime only with the two first Letters, and sometime with fictitious cramp terms, which few shall understand the meaning of; and of those that do, All shall not agree in their verdict of the performance; some censuring, others approving it, mens judgments being as different as their palates, That being toothsome to one, which is unsavoury, and nauseous to another: though it is a sneaking piece of cowardice for Authors to put *feigned names* to their works, as if like *Bastards*

Lards of their Brain they were afraid to *own* them. Thus one ſtiles himſelf *Telemachus*, another *Stelenus*, a third *Polycrates*, another *Thraſymachus*, and ſo on: by the ſame liberty we may ranſack the whole Alphabet, and jumble together any Letters that come next to hand. It is farther very pleaſant, when theſe Coxcombs employ their pens in writing congratulatory Epiſtles, Poems, and Panegyricks upon each other, wherein one ſhall be complemented with the Title of *Alcæus*, another ſhall be character'd for the incomparable *Callimachus*, This ſhall be commended for a compleater Orator than *Tully* himſelf; a fourth ſhall be told by his fellow-fool, that the Divine *Plato* comes ſhort of him for a Philoſophick ſoul. Sometime again they take up the cudgels, and challenge out an *Antagoniſt*, and ſo get a name by a combat at diſpute, and controverſy, while the unwary Readers draw ſides according to their different judgments; the longer the quarrel holds, the more irreconcileable it grows; and when both parties are weary, they *each* pretend themſelves the *Conquerours*, and *both* lay claime to the credit of coming off with *victory*. Theſe Fooleries make ſport for Wiſe men, as being highly abſurd, ridiculous, and extravagant. True, but yet theſe Paper-combatants by my aſſiſtance are ſo fluſh'd with a conceit of their own greatneſs, that they prefer the ſolving of a *Syllogiſm* before the ſacking of *Carthage*; and upon the defeat of a poor objection carry themſelves more *triumphant*, than the moſt victorious *Scipio*.

Nay, even the *Learned*, and more *Judicious*, that

that have wit enough to laugh at the others Folly, are very much beholden to my goodness, which (except ingratitude have drowned their ingenuity) they must be ready upon all occasions to confess. Among these I suppose the *Lawyers* will shuffle in for precedence, and they of all men have the greatest conceit of their own abilities. They'l argue as confidently, as if they spoke *Gospel* instead of *Law*: They'l cite you six hundred several *Presidents*, though not one of them come near to the case in hand: They'l muster up the authority of *Judgments*, *Deeds*, *Glosses*, and *Reports*, and tumble over so many musty *Records*, that they make their employ, though in it self easie, the greatest slavery imaginable; always accounting that the *best Plea*, which they have took *most pains* for.

To these, as bearing great resemblance to them, may be added *Logicians*, and Sophisters, fellows that talk as much by rote as a Parrot; who shall run down a whole Gossiping of Old women, nay silence the very noise of a *Belfry* with *louder* clappers, than those in the *Steeple*: And if their unappeasable clamourousness were their only fault, it would admit of some excuse; but they are at the same time so fierce, and quarrelsome, that they'l wrangle bloodily for the least trifle, and be so over-intent, and eager, that they many times lose their game in the chace, and *fright away* that truth they are *hunting* for. Yet Self-conceit makes these nimble Disputants such doughty *Champions*, that armed with three or four close-link'd Syllogisms, they shall enter the *lists* with the

the greatest Masters of Reason, and not question the foiling of them in an irresistible *Baffle*: nay, their obstinacy makes them so confident of their being in the right, that all the arguments in the world shall never convince them to the contrary.

Next to These come the *Philosophers* in their *long* Beards, and *short* Cloaks, who esteem themselves the only favourites of Wisdom, and look upon the rest of Mankind as the *dirt*, and *rubbish* of the Creation: yet These mens happiness is only a frantick crasiness of Brain; they build Castles in the Air, and infinite worlds in a *vacuum*: They'l give you to a hairs breadth the dimensions of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, as easily as they would do that of a Flaggon, or Pipkin: They'l give a punctual account of the rise of *Thunder*, of the Origin of *Winds*, of the nature of *Eclipses*, and of all the other abstrusest difficulties in *Physicks*, without the least demur, or hæsitation, as if they had been admitted into the Cabinet Council of Nature, or had been Eye witnesses to all the accurate methods of Creation: Though, alas, Nature does but laugh at all their puny conjectures; for they never yet made one considerable discovery, as appears, in that they are unanimously agreed in no one point of the smallest moment; nothing so plain, or evident, but what by some or other is opposed, and contradicted. But though they are ignorant of the artificial contexture of the least Insect, they vaunt however, and brag, that they know all things, when indeed they are unable to construe the mechanisme of

their

their own Body: nay, when they are so purblind, as not to be able to see a stones-cast before them, yet they shall be as sharp-sighted as possible in spying out Ideas, Universals, separate Forms, first Matters, Quiddities, Formalities, and a hundred such like niceties, so diminutively *small*, that were not their eyes extreamly magnifying, all the art of *Opticks* could never make them *discernible*. But they then most despise the low groveling Vulgar, when they bring out their Parallels, Triangles, Circles, and other Mathematical figures, drawn up in Battalia like so many Spells, and Charms of Conjuration in Muster, with letters to refer to the explication of the several Problems; hereby *raising* Divels as it were, only to have the credit of *laying* them, and amusing the ordinary Spectators into wonder, because they have not wit enough to understand the juggle. Of These, some undertake to profess themselves *Judicial Astrologers*, pretending to keep correspondence with the Stars, and so from their information can resolve any Query; and though it is all but a Presumptuous Imposture, yet some to be sure will be so great fools as to believe them.

The *Divines* present themselves next; but it may perhaps be most safe to pass them by, and not at all to touch upon so harsh a string, as this subject would afford. Beside, the Undertaking may be very hazardous; for they are a sort of men generally very hot, and passionate; and should I provoke them, I doubt would set upon me with a full cry, and force me with shame to *retract*: which if I stubbornly refuse to do, they

ſently brand me for an *Heretick*; and thunder out an *Excommunication*, which is their Spiritual *weapon*, to *wound* ſuch as lift up a hand againſt them. It is true, no men own a leſs dependance on me, yet have they reaſon to confeſs themſelves indebted for no ſmall obligations. For it is by one of my Properties, Self-love, that they fancy themſelves, with their elder Brother *Paul*, caught up into the third Heaven, from whence like *Shepherds* indeed they look down upon their *Flock*, the Laity *grazing*, as it were, in the Vales of the world below. They fence themſelves in with ſo many ſurrounders of Magiſterial Definitions, Concluſions, Corollaries, Propoſitions explicite, and implicite, that there is no falling in with them; or if they do chance to be urged to a ſeeming *Non-plus*, yet they find out ſo many evaſions, that all the art of Man can never bind them ſo faſt, but that an eaſie diſtinction ſhall give them a ſtarting hole, to eſcape the ſcandal of being baffled. They'l cut aſunder the toughest argument with as much eaſe, as *Alexander* did the Gordian knot: they'l thunder out ſo many rattling Terms as ſhall fright an adverſary into conviction. They are exquiſitely dexterous in unfolding the moſt intricate Myſteries: They'l tell you to a tittle all the ſucceſſive proceedings of Omnipotence in the Creation of the Univerſe; they'l explain the preciſe manner of *Original ſin* being derived from our firſt Parents; they'l ſatisfie you in what manner, by what degrees, and in how long a time our Saviour was *conceived* in the Virgins womb, and demonſtrate in the conſecrated

Wafer

Wafer how *Accidents* may ſubſiſt without a *Subject*. Nay, theſe are accounted trivial, eaſie queſtions; they have yet far greater difficulties behind, which notwithſtanding they ſolve with as much expedition as the former: as namely, whether Supernatural *generation* requires any inſtant of time for its *acting*? Whether Chriſt, as a Son, bears a double ſpecifically diſtinct *Relation* to God the Father, and his Virgin Mother? Whether This Propoſition is poſſible to be true; The *firſt* perſon of the Trinity hated the *ſecond*? Whether God, who took our nature upon him in the form of a Man, could as well have become a Woman, a Devil, a Beaſt, an Herb, or a Stone; and were it ſo poſſible, that the Godhead had appeared in the ſhape of an inanimate ſubſtance, how he ſhould then have preached his Goſpel, or how have been nailed to the Croſs? Whether, if St. *Peter* had celebrated the Euchariſt at the ſame time our Saviour was hanging on the Croſs, the conſecrated bread would have been *tranſubſtantiated* into the ſame body that remained on the Tree? Whether in Chriſt's Corporal Preſence in the Sacramental Wafer, his *Humanity* be not abſtracted from his *Godhead*? Whether after the Reſurrection we ſhall carnally eat, and drink, as we do in this life? There are a thouſand other more ſublimated, and refined nicities of *Notions*, *Relations*, *Quantities*, *Formalities*, *Quiddities*, *Hecceities*, and ſuch like *Abſtruſities*, as one would think no one could pry into, except he had, not only ſuch Cats-eyes as to ſee beſt in the *dark*, but even ſuch a piercing faculty, as to ſee through an *Inch-board*, and ſpy out

what really never had any being. Add to these some of their Tenets, and Opinions, which are so absurd, and extravagant, that the wildest fancies of the Stoicks, which they so much disdain, and decry as Paradoxes, seem in comparison just, and rational; as their maintaining, That it is a less aggravating fault to *kill* a hundred men, than for a poor Cobler to set a stich on the Sabbath day; or, That it is more justifiable to do the greatest injury imaginable to others, than to tell the least Lie our selves. And these Subtleties are Alchymized to a more refined Sublimate, by the abstracting brains of their several Schoolmen; the *Realists*, the *Nominalists*, the *Thomists*, the *Albertists*, the *Occamists*, the *Scotists*; these are not all, but the rehearsal of a few only, as a *Specimen* of their divided Sects: In each of which there is so much of deep learning, so much of unfathomable difficulty, that I believe the Apostles themselves would stand in need of a new illuminating *Spirit*, if they were to engage in any controversie with these new Divines. St. *Paul* no question had a full measure of faith, yet when he lays down *Faith* to be *the substance of things not seen*, these men carp at it for an imperfect Definition, and would undertake to teach the Apostles better Logick. Thus the same holy Author wanted for nothing of the Grace of *Charity*, yet (say they) he describes, and defines it but very unaccurately, when he treats of it in the thirteenth Chapter of his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*. The primitive Disciples were very frequent in administring the *Holy Sacrament*, *breaking bread from house to house*; yet should they be asked

asked of the *Terminus à quo*, and the *Terminus ad quem*, the nature of *Tranſubſtantiation*, the manner how *one* Body can be in *ſeveral* places at the *ſame* time; the difference betwixt the ſeveral Attributes of Chriſt in Heaven, on the Croſs, and in the conſecrated Bread; what time is required for the Tranſubſtantiating the Bread into Fleſh; how it can be done by a *ſhort ſentence* pronounced by the Prieſt, which ſentence is a Species of *diſcrete Quantity*, that has no permanent *punctum*? Were they asked (I ſay) theſe, and ſeveral other confuſed Queries, I don't believe they could anſwer ſo readily, as our mincing Schoolmen now adays take a pride to do. They were well acquainted with the *Virgin Mary*, yet none of them undertook to prove, that ſhe was preſerved *immaculate* from Original ſin, as ſome of our Divines very hotly contend for. St. *Peter* had the *Keys* given to him, and that by our Saviour himſelf, who had never entruſted him, except he had known him capable of their manage, and cuſtody; and yet it is much to be queſtioned, whether *Peter* was ſenſible of that *ſubtlety* broach'd by *Scotus*, That he may have the *Key* of Knowledge *effectually* for others, who has no Knowledge *actually* in himſelf. Again, They *baptized all Nations*, and yet never taught what was the *Formal*, *Material*, *Efficient*, and *Final Cauſe* of *Baptiſme*, and certainly never dream't of diſtinguiſhing between a *Delible*, and an *Indelible* Character in this Sacrament. They worſhipped in the *Spirit*, following their Maſter's injunction, *God is a Spirit, and they which worſhip him, muſt worſhip him in Spirit, and in Truth*; yet it

don't

don't appear, that it was ever reveal'd to them, How Divine Adoration ſhould be paid at the ſame time to our *bleſſed Saviour* in Heaven, and to his *Picture* here below on a wall, drawn with two fingers held out, a bald crown, and a circle round his head. To reconcile theſe intricacies to an appearance of Reaſon, requires threeſcore years experience in Metaphyſicks.

Farther, the Apoſtles often mention *Grace*, yet never diſtinguiſh betwixt *gratia gratis data*, and *gratia gratificans*. They earneſtly exhort us likewiſe to *good works*, yet never explain the difference between *Opus operans*, and *Opus operatum*. They very frequently preſs and invite us to ſeek after *Charity*, without dividing it into *Infuſed*, and *Acquired*, or determining whether it be a *Subſtance*, or an *Accident*, a *Created*, or an *Uncreated being*. They deteſted *Sin* themſelves, and warned others from the commiſſion of it; and yet I'me ſure, they could never have *defined* ſo dogmatically, as the *Scotiſts* have ſince done. St. *Paul*, who in others judgment is no leſs the chief of the *Apoſtles*, than he was in his own, the *chief of Sinners*, who being *bred at the feet of Gamaliel* was certainly more eminently a Schollar, than any of the reſt; yet he often exclaims againſt *vain Philoſophy*, warns us from *doting about queſtions, and ſtrifes of words*, and charges us to *avoid profane, and vain Bablings, and oppoſitions of Science falſly ſo called*; which he would not have done, if he had thought it worth his while to have become acquainted with them, which he might ſoon have been, the Diſputes of that Age being but ſmall, and more intelligible

ble Sophiſms, in reference to the vaſtly greater intricacies they are now improved to. But yet however our Scholaſtick Divines are ſo modeſt, that if they meet with any paſſage in St *Paul*, or any other *Pen-man* of Holy writ, which is not ſo well modell'd, or critically diſpoſed of as they could wiſh, they will not roughly condemn it, but bend it rather to a favourable interpretation, out of reverence to Antiquity, and reſpect to the Holy Scriptures; though indeed it were unreaſonable to expect any thing of this nature from the Apoſtles, whoſe Lord and Maſter had given unto them to know the *myſteries* of *God*, but not thoſe of *Philoſophy*. If the ſame Divines meet with any thing of like nature unpalatable in St. *Chryſoſtom*, St. *Baſil*, St. *Hierom*, or others of the *Fathers*, they will not ſtick to appeal from their Authority, and very fairly reſolve, that They lay under a miſtake; yet Theſe ancient Fathers were they, who confuted both the Jews, and Heathens, though they both obſtinately adhered to their reſpective prejudices; they confuted them (I ſay,) yet by their *Lives*, and *Miracles*, rather than by *Words*, and *Syllogiſms*; and the perſons they thus proſelyted were right down honeſt, well-meaning people, ſuch as underſtood plain ſenſe, better than an artificial pomp of Reaſoning: Whereas if *our Divines* ſhould now ſet about the gaining *Converts* from Paganiſm by their Metaphyſical ſubtleties, they would find, that moſt of the perſons they applied themſelves to, were either ſo ignorant, as not at all to apprehend them, or ſo impudent, as to ſcoff, and deride them;

or finally, so well skill'd at the same weapons, that they would be able to keep their Pass, and fence off all assault of Conviction: and this last way, the victory would be altogether as hopeless, as if two persons were engaged of so equal strength, that it were impossible any one should over-power the other.

If my judgment might be taken, I would advise *Christians*, in their next expedition to a *Holy war*, instead of those many unsuccessful Legions, which they have hitherto sent to encounter the *Turks*, and *Saracens*, that they would furnish out their clamorous *Scotists*, their obstinate *Occamists*, their invincible *Albertists*, and all their forces of tough, crabbed, and profound *Disputants*: the Engagement, I fancy, would be mighty pleasant, and the victory we may imagine on our side, not to be questioned. For which of the Enemies would not vail their *Turbants* at so solemn an appearance? Which of the fiercest *Janizaries* would not throw away his *Cimiter*, and all the *Half-Moons* be *eclypsed* by the interposition of so glorious an Army?

I suppose you mistrust I speak all this by way of Jeer, and Irony: And well I may, since among Divines themselves there are some so ingenuous, as to despise these captious and frivolous impertinencies; they look upon it as a kind of profane sacriledge, and a little less than blasphemous impiety, to determine of such niceties in Religion, as ought rather to be the subject of an humble, and uncontradicting *Faith*, than of a scrupulous, and inquisitive *Reason*; they abhor a defiling the my-

myſteries of Chriſtianity with an intermixture of Heatheniſh Philoſophy, and judge it very improper to reduce Divinity to an obſcure *ſpeculative Science*, whoſe end is ſuch a happineſs, as can be gained only by the means of *Practice*. But alas thoſe *Notional Divines*, however condemned by the ſoberer judgment of others, are yet mightily pleaſed with themſelves, and are ſo laboriouſly intent upon proſecuting their crabbed Studies, that they cannot afford ſo much time as to read a ſingle Chapter in any one Book of the whole Bible. And while they thus triſle away their miſpent hours in traſh, and babble, they think that they *ſupport* the Catholick Church with the props and pillars of Propoſitions, and Syllogiſms, no leſs effectually, than *Atlas* is feigned by the Poets to ſuſtain on his ſhoulders the *burden* of a tottering world. Their Priviledges too, and Authority are very conſiderable: They can deal with any Text of Scripture as with a *Noſe of wax*, knead it into what ſhape beſt ſuits their intereſt; and whatever Concluſions they have dogmatically reſolved upon, they would have them as irrepealably ratified, as *Solon*'s Laws, and in as great force as the very *Decrees* of the Papal Chair. If any be ſo bold as to remonſtrate to their Deciſions, they'l bring him on his knees to a Recantation of his Impudence. They ſhall pronounce as irrevocably as an Oracle; This Propoſition is Scandalous, That Irreverent; This has a ſmack of Hereſy, and That is Bald, and Improper: So that it is not the being *Baptiſed* into the Church, the Believing of the *Scriptures*, the giv-

ing credit to St. *Peter*, St. *Paul*, St. *Hierom*, St. *Auguſtin*, nay, or St. *Thomas Aquinas* himſelf, that ſhall make a man a *Chriſtian*, except he have the joynt ſuffrage of theſe Novices in learning, who have bleſſed the world no doubt with a great many diſcoveries; which had never come to light, if they had not ſtruck the Fire of Subtlety out of the Flint of Obſcurity. Theſe Fooleries ſure muſt be a happy employ.

Farther, they make as many partitions, and diviſions in *Hell*, and *Purgatory* and deſcribe as many different ſorts and degrees of puniſhment, as if they were very well acquainted with the ſoil, and ſituation of thoſe Infernal Regions. And, to prepare a Seat for the Bleſſed above, they invent new Orbs, and a ſtately *Empyraan* Heaven, ſo wide, and ſpatious, as if they had purpoſely contriv'd it, that the Glorified Saints might have room enough to walk, to feaſt, or to take any recreation.

With theſe, and a thouſand more ſuch like toies their heads are more ſtuff'd, and ſwell'd, than *Jove*, when he went big of *Pallas* in his brain, and was forced to uſe the Midwivery of *Vulcan*'s Axe, to eaſe him of his teeming burden. Do not wonder therefore, that at publick Diſputations they bind their heads with ſo many *Caps* one over another; for This is to prevent the loſs of their brains, which would otherwiſe break out from their uneaſie confinement. It affords likewiſe a pleaſant ſcene of laughter, to liſten to theſe Divines in their hotly managed Diſputations; to ſee how proud they are of talking ſuch hard

gib-

gibbriſh, and ſtammering out ſuch blundring diſtinctions, as the Auditors perhaps may ſometimes gape at, but ſelſdom apprehend: And they take ſuch a liberty in their ſpeaking of *Latine*, that they ſcorn to ſtick at the exactneſs of *Syntax*, or Concord, pretending it is below the majeſty of a *Divine* to talk like a *Padagogue*, and be tied to the ſlaviſh obſervance of the Rules of Grammer. Finally, they take a vaſt pride, among other citations, to alledge the authority of their reſpective *Maſter*, which word they bear as profound a reſpect to, as the *Jews* did to their ineffable *Tetragrammaton*, and therefore they'l be ſure never to write it any otherwiſe, than in great Letters, MAGISTER NOSTER; and if any happen to invert the order of the words, and ſay, *Noſter Magiſter*, inſtead of *Magiſter Noſter*, they'l preſently exclaim againſt him, as a peſtilent Heretick, and underminer of the Catholick Faith.

The next to theſe are another ſort of brainſick Fools, who ſtile themſelves *Monks*, and of *Religious Orders*, though they aſſume both Titles very unjuſtly: For as to the *laſt*, they have very little of *Religion* in them; and as to the *former*, the Etymology of the word, *Monk*, implies a ſolitarineſs, or being alone, whereas they are ſo thick abroad, that we cannot paſs any ſtreet, or ally, without meeting them. Now I cannot imagine, what one degree of men would be more hopeleſly wretched, if I did not ſtand their friend, and buoy them up in that lake of miſery, which by the engagements of a Holy Vow they have vo-

luntarily immerg'd themſelves in. But when theſe ſort of men are ſo unwelcome to others, as that the very ſight of them is thought ominous; I yet make them highly in love with themſelves, and fond admirers of their own happineſs. The firſt ſtep whereunto, they eſteem a profound Ignorance, thinking *Carnal* knowledge a great enemy to their *Spiritual* welfare, and ſeem confident of becoming greater Proficients in *Divine* myſteries, the leſs they are poyſoned with any *Humane* Learning. They imagine, that they bear a ſweet *c nſort* with the Heavenly Quire, when they *tone out* their daily Tally of Pſalms, which they rehearſe only by rote, without permitting their underſtanding or affections to go along with their voice. Among theſe, ſome make a good profitable trade of *Beggery*, going about from houſe to houſe, not like the Apoſtles, to *Break*, but to *Beg* their Bread; nay, thruſt into all publick houſes, come aboard the Paſſage-boats, get into the travailing Waggons, and omit no opportunity of time, or place for the craving peoples charity; doing a great deal of injury to common high-way beggars, by interloping in their traffick of Alms. And when they are thus voluntarily poor, deſtitute, not provided with two coats, nor with any money in their purſe, they have the impudence to pretend, that they imitate the firſt Diſciples, whom their Maſter expreſly ſent out in ſuch an equipage. It is pretty to obſerve, how they regulate all their actions, as it were by weight, and meaſure, to ſo exact a proportion, as if the whole loſs of their religion depended upon the omiſ-

omiſſion of the leaſt Punctilio. Thus they muſt be very critical in the preciſe number of *Knots* to the tying on of their *ſandals*; what diſtinct *colours* their reſpective habits, and what *ſtuff* made of; how broad, and long their *girdles*; how big, and in what faſhion their *hoods*; whether their bald crowns be to a *hairs breadth* of the right cut; how many hours they muſt ſleep, at what minute riſe to Prayers, *&c.* And theſe ſeveral cuſtoms are altered according to the humours of different perſons, and places. While they are ſworn to the ſuperſtitious obſervance of theſe trifles, they do not only deſpiſe all others, but are very inclinable to fall out among themſelves; for though they make profeſſion of an Apoſtolick charity, yet they'l pick a quarrel, and be implacably paſſionate for ſuch poor provocations, as the girting on a coat the wrong way, for the wearing of cloaths a little too darkiſh colcured, or any ſuch nicety, not worth the ſpeaking of. Some are ſo obſtinately ſuperſtitious, that they'l wear their upper garment of ſome courſe dogs-hair ſtuff, and that next their skin as ſoft as ſilk: But others on the contrary will have linnen frocks outermoſt, and their ſhirts of wool, or hair. Some again will not touch a piece of money, though they make no ſcruple of the ſin of drunkenneſs, and the luſt of the fleſh. All their ſeveral Orders are mindful of nothing more than of their being *diſtinguiſht* each from other by their different cuſtoms, and habits. They ſeem indeed not ſo careful of becoming *like Chriſt*, and of being known to be his Diſciples, as the being *unlike* to one another,

and

and distinguishable for followers of their several *Founders*. A great part of their Religion consists in their *Title*: Some will be call'd *Cordeliers*, and these subdivided into *Capuchines*, *Minors*, *Minims*, and *Mendicants*: Some again are stiled *Benedictines*, others of the Order of St. *Bernard*, others of that of St. *Bridget*; some are *Augustin Monks*, some *Willielmites*, and other *Jacobists*, as if the common name of *Christian* were too mean, and vulgar. Most of them place their greatest stress for salvation on a strict conformity to their foppish ceremonies, and a belief of their Legendary Traditions; wherein they fancy to have acquitted themselves with so much of Supererogation, that *one* Heaven can never be a *condign* reward for their meritorious life; little thinking, that the Judge of all the Earth, at the last day, shall put them off with a *who hath required These things at your hands*? and call them to an account only for the Stewardship of his *Legacy*, which was the Precept of *Love*, and *Charity*. It will be pretty to hear their several Pleas before the great Tribunal: One will brag how he *mortified* his carnal appetite, by feeding only upon *Fish*: Another will urge, that he spent most of his time on earth in the Divine exercise of *singing Psalms*: A third will tell, how many days he *fasted* and what severe *Penance* he imposed on himself, for the bringing his body into subjection: Another shall produce in his own behalf as many *Ceremonies*, as would load a Fleet of Merchant-men: A fifth shall plead, that in threescore years he never so much as toucht a piece of *Money*, except he fin-

ger'd

ger'd it through a thick pair of Gloves: A ſixth, to teſtifie his former *Humility*, ſhall bring along with him his *ſacred Hood*, ſo old, and naſty, that any Seaman had rather ſtand bare-headed on the Deck, than put it on, to defend his ears from the ſharpeſt ſtorms: The next that comes to anſwer for himſelf, ſhall plead, that for fifty years together he had lived like a Sponge upon the *ſame place*, and was content never to change his homely Habitation: Another ſhall whiſper ſoftly, and tell the Judge, he has loſt his voice by a continual ſinging of holy *Hymns*, and *Anthems*: The next ſhall confeſs, how he fell into a *Lethargy* by a ſtrict, reſerved, and ſedentary life: And the laſt ſhall intimate, that he has forgot to ſpeak, by having always *kept ſilence*, in obedience to the Injunction, of *taking heed, leaſt he ſhould have offended with his Tongue.* But amidſt all their fine excuſes our Saviour ſhall interrupt them with this anſwer, *Wo unto you Scribes, and Phariſees, Hypocrites, verily I know you not*; I left you but one Precept of *loving one another*, which I do not hear any one plead he has faithfully diſcharged: I told you plainly in my Goſpel, without any Parable, that my *Father's Kingdom* was *prepared*, not for ſuch as ſhould lay claim to it by *Auſterities*, *Prayers*, or *Faſtings*, but for thoſe who ſhould render themſelves worthy of it, by the exerciſe of *Faith*, and the offices of *Charity*: I cannot own ſuch as depend on their own *Merits*, without a reliance on my *Mercy*: As many of you therefore, as truſt to the broken reeds of your own Deſerts, may e'en go ſearch out a new Heaven, for you ſhall

never

never enter into *That*, which from the foundations of the world was prepared only for such as are *true of heart*. When these Monks and Friers shall meet with such a shameful repulse, and see that Ploughmen, and Mechanicks are *admitted* into that Kingdom, from which They themselves are *shut out*; how sneakingly will they look, and how pittifully slink away? Yet till this last Trial they had more comfort of a future happiness, because more hopes of it than any other men. And These persons are not only great in their own eyes, but highly esteem'd, and respected by others, especially Those of the *Order of Mendicants*, whom none dare to offer any affront to, because as *Confessors* they are intrusted with all the secrets of particular Intrigues, which they are bound by Oath not to discover; yet many times, when they are almost drunk, they cannot keep their tongue so far within their head, as not to be babbling out some hints, and shewing themselves so full, that they are in pain to be delivered. If any person give them the least provocation, they'l be sure to be reveng'd of him, and in their next publick harangue give him such shrewd wipes, and reflexions, that the whole congregation must needs take notice at whom they are levell'd; nor will they ever desist from this way of declaiming, till their mouth be stopt with a Bribe to hold their tongue. All their *Preaching* is meer Stage-playing, and their Delivery the very transports of *Ridicule*, and *Drollery*. Good Lord! How mimical are their Gestures? What heights, and falls in their Voice? What toning, what bawling, what

what ſinging, what ſqueaking, what grimaces, making of mouths, Apes faces, and diſtorting of their countenance? And this Art of Oratory, as a choice myſtery, they convey down by tradition to one another. The manner of it I may adventure thus farther to enlarge upon. Firſt, in a kind of mockery they implore the Divine aſſiſtance, which they borrowed from the ſolemn cuſtom of the Poets: Then, if their Text, ſuppoſe, be of *Charity*, they ſhall take their *Exordium* as far off, as from a deſcription of the River *Nile* in *Egypt*; Or, if they are to diſcourſe of the myſtery of the *Croſs*, they ſhall begin with a ſtory of *Bel, and the Dragon*; Or, perchance if their ſubject be of *Faſting*, for an entrance to their Sermon, they ſhall paſs through the twelve Signs of the *Zodiack*; Or, laſtly, if they are to preach of *Faith*, they ſhall addreſs themſelves in a long Mathematical account of the *Quadrature of the Circle*. I my ſelſe once heard a great *Fool*, (a great *Scholar* I would have ſaid) undertaking in a laborious diſcourſe to explain the myſtery of the *Holy Trinity*; in the unfolding whereof, that he might ſhew his wit, and reading, and together ſatisfie *itching Ears*, he proceeded in a new method, as by inſiſting on the Letters, Syllables, and Propoſition, on the Concord of Noun, and Verb, and that of Noun Subſtantive, and Noun Adjective; the Auditors all wondred, and ſome mumbled to themſelves that Hemiſtich of *Horace*,

-----Quorſum hæc tam putrida tendunt?

Why all this needleſs Traſh?

But at last he brought it thus far, That he could demonstrate the whole *Trinity* to be represented by these first rudiments of *Grammar*, as clearly, and plainly, as it was possible for a Mathematician to draw a *Triangle* in the Sand: And for the making of this grand discovery, this subtle Divine had plodded so hard for eight months together, that he studied himself as blind as a beetle, the intenseness of the Eye of his *understanding* over-shadowing, and extinguishing that of his *body*; and yet he did not at all repent him of his blindness, but thinks the loss of his sight an easie purchase for the gain of glory, and credit.

I heard at another time a grave Divine, of fourscore years of age at least, so sowr, and hard-favoured, that one would be apt to mistrust that it was *Scotus Redivivus*; he taking upon him to treat of the mysterious Name, *Jesus*, did very subtilely pretend, that in the very *letters* was contained whatever could be said of it: for, first, its being declined only with *three Cases*, did expressly point out the *Trinity* of Persons; then, that the *Nominative* case ended in *S*, the *Accusative* in *M*, and the *Ablative* in *U*, did imply some unspeakable mystery, namely, that in words of those *Initial* Letters, Christ was the *Summus*, or *Beginning*, the *Medius*, or *Middle*, and the *Ultimus*, or *End* of All things. There was yet a more abstruse riddle to be explained, which was by dividing the word *JESUS* into two parts, and separating the *S* in the middle from the two *extreme* syllables, making it a kind of *Pentameter*, the word consisting of five letters: and this intermedial

medial *S* being in the Hebrew Alphabet call'd *Sin*, which in the English language signifies what the Latines term *Peccatum*, was urged to imply, that the Holy *Jesus* should purifie us from all *sin*, and *wickedness*. Thus did the Pulpiteer cant, while all the Congregation, especially the Brotherhood of Divines, were so surprised at this odd way of Preaching, that Wonder served them, as Grief did *Niobe*, almost turned them into Stones; I among the rest (as *Horace* describes *Priapus*, viewing the Enchantments of the two Sorceresses, *Canidia*, and *Sagane*,) could no longer contain, but let flie a cracking report of the operation it had upon me. These impertinent Introductions are not without reason condemn'd; for of old, whenever *Demosthenes* among the Greeks, or *Tully* among the Latines, began their Orations with so great a digression from the matter in hand, it was alway look'd upon as *improper*, and *inelegant*: And indeed, were such a long-fetcht *Exordium* any token of a good invention, Shepherds, and Ploughmen might lay claim to the title of men of greatest parts, since upon any argument it is easiest for them to talk what is least to the purpose. These Preachers think their *Preamble* (as we may well term it) to be the most fashionable, when it is fartheſt from the subject they propose to treat of, while each Auditor sits, and wonders what they drive at, and many times mutter out the complaint of *Virgil*,

——Quò nunc se proripit ille?
Whither does all this Jargon tend?

In the third place, when they come to the *Diviſion* of their Text, they ſhall give only a very ſhort touch at the interpretation of the words, when the fuller explication of their ſenſe ought to have been their only Province. Fourthly, after they are a little entred, they ſhall ſtart ſome Theological Queries, far enough off from the matter in hand, and bandy it about *Pro* and *Con*, till they looſe it in the heat of ſcuffle. And here they ſhall cite their Doctors *Invincible*, *Subtle*, *Seraphick*, *Chembick*, *Holy*, *Irrefragable*, and ſuch like great Names, to confirm their ſeveral Aſſertions. Then out they bring their Syllogiſms, their Majors, their Minors, Concluſions, Corollaries, Suppoſitions, and Diſtinctions, that will ſooner terrifie the Congregation into an Amazement, than perſwade them into a Conviction. Now comes the *ſixth Act*, in which they muſt exert their utmoſt skill to come off with applauſe. Here therefore they fall a telling ſome ſad lamentable ſtory out of their Legend, or ſome other fabulous Hiſtory; and this they deſcant upon *Allegorically*, *Tropologically*, and *Analogically*: and ſo they draw to a *Concluſion* of their Diſcourſe, which is a more brain-ſick Chimæra, than ever *Horace* could deſcribe in his *De Arte Poetica*, when he began,

Humano Capiti, &c.

Their *Praying* is altogether as ridiculous, as their *Preaching*; for imagining, that in their addreſſes to Heaven they ſhould ſet out in a low, and tremulous voice, as a token of dread, and reverence;

rence; they begin therefore with such a soft *whispering*, as if they were afraid any one should over-hear what they said, but when they are gone a little way, they clear up their pipes by degrees, and at last *bawl* out so loud, as if with *Baal's Priests* they were resolved to awake a *sleeping God*. And then again being told by Rhetoricians, that Heights, and Falls, and a different Cadency in Pronuntiation is a great advantage to the setting off any thing that is spoke, they'l sometimes as it were mutter their words inwardly, and then of a suddain hollow themout, and be sure at last in such a flat faltring tone, as if their spirits were spent, and they had run themselves out of breath. Lastly, they have read, that most Systems of Rhetorick treat of the Art of exciting Laughter; therefore for the effecting of This, they'l sprinkle some Jests, and Puns, that must pass for ingenuity, though they are only the froth of Folly, and Affectedness. Sometime they'l nibble at the wit of being Satyrical, though their utmost Spleen is so toothless, that they suck rather than bite, tickle rather than scratch, or wound: Nor do they ever flatter more, than at such times as they pretend to speak with greatest freedom.

Finally, all their Actions are so buffoonish, and mimical, that any would judge they had learned all their tricks of Mountebanks, and Stage players, who in *Action* it is true may perhaps outdoe them, but in *Oratory* there is so little odds between both, that it is hard to determine which seems of longest standing in the Schools of Eloquence. Yet These Preachers, however ridiculous,

lous, meet with such hearers, who admire them as much as the people of *Athens* did *Demosthenes*, or the Citizens of *Rome* could do *Cicero*: Among which *Admirers* are chiefly *Shop-keepers*, and *Women*, whose approbation and good opinion They only court; because the *first*, if they are humoured, give them some snacks out of unjust gain; and the *last* come, and ease their grief to them upon all pinching occasions, especially when their husbands are any ways cross, or unkind.

Thus much, I suppose, may suffice to make you sensible, how much these Cell-Hermites, and Recluses, are indebted to my bounty; who, when they tyrannize over the consciences of the deluded Laity with fopperies, juggles, and impostures, yet think themselves as eminently pious, as St. *Paul*, St. *Anthony*, or any other of the Saints: But these Stage-Divines, not less ungrateful disowners of their obligations to Folly, than they are impudent pretenders to the profession of piety, I willingly take my leave of, and passe now to *Kings*, *Princes*, and *Courtiers*, who paying me a devout acknowledgment, may justly challenge back the respect of being mentioned, and taken notice of by me. And first, had they wisdom enough to make a true judgment of things, they would find their *own* condition to be more despicable, and slavish, than that of the most menial *Subjects*. For certainly none can esteem Perjury, or Parricide a cheap purchase for a *Crown*, if he does but seriously reflect on that weight of cares a Princely Diadem is *loaded* with. He that sits at the Helm of Government acts in a publick capacity, and so

must

muſt ſacrifice all *private* intereſt to the attainment of the *common* good: He muſt *himſelf* be conformable to thoſe Laws his Prerogative enacts, or elſe he can expect no obedience paid them from *others*; He muſt have a ſtrict eye over all his inferiour Magiſtrates, and Officers, or otherwiſe it is to be doubted they will but careleſly diſcharge their reſpective Duties. Every *King*, within his own Territories, is placed for a ſhining Example, as it were in the *Firmament* of his wide-ſpread Dominions, to prove either a glorious *Star* of benign influence, if his behaviour be remarkably juſt, and innocent, or elſe to impend as a threatning *Comet*, if his blazing power be peſtilent, and hurtful. Subjects move in a darker *Sphere*, and ſo their *wandrings* and *failings* are leſs diſcernible; whereas Princes, being fixt in a more exalted *Orb*, and encompaſſed with a brighter dazling luſtre, their *ſpots* are more apparently viſible, and their *Eclipſes*, or other defects, influential on all that is inferiour to them. Kings are baited with ſo many temptations, and opportunities to vice, and immorality, ſuch as are High Feeding, Liberty, Flattery, Luxury, and the like, that they muſt ſtand perpetually on their guard, to fence off thoſe aſſaults, that are always ready to be made upon them. In fine, abating from Treachery, Hatred, Dangers, Fear, and a thouſand other miſchiefs impending on crowned heads, however uncontrolable they are on this ſide Heaven, yet after their Reign here, they muſt appear before a *ſupremer Judge*, and there be call'd to an exact account for the diſcharge of that great

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Stewardſhip which was committed to their *truſt*. If Princes did but ſeriouſly conſider (and *conſider* they would, if they were but *wiſe*) theſe many hardſhips of a Royal life, they would be ſo perplexed in the reſult of their thoughts hereupon, as ſcarce to eat, or ſleep in quiet. But now by my aſſiſtance they leave all theſe cares to the Gods, and mind only their own eaſe, and pleaſure, and therefore will admit none to their attendance, but who will divert them with ſport, and mirth, leſt they ſhould otherwiſe be ſeiſed, and damp'd with the ſurpriſal of ſober thoughts: They think they have ſufficiently acquitted themſelves in the duty of governing, if they do but ride conſtantly a hunting, breed up good Race-horſes, ſell Places, and Offices to thoſe of the Courtiers that will give moſt for them, and find out new ways for invading of their peoples Property, and hooking in a larger Revenue to their own Exchequer; for the procurement whereof they'l alway have ſome pretended claim, and title; that though it be manifeſt extortion, yet it may bear the ſhew of Law, and Juſtice: And then they dawb over their oppreſſion with a ſubmiſſive, flattering carriage, that they may ſo far inſinuate into the affections of the vulgar, as they may not tumult, nor rebel, but patiently crouch to burdens, and exactions. Let us feign now a Perſon ignorant of the Laws, and Conſtitutions of that Realm he lives in, an enemy to the publick good, ſtudious only of his own private intereſt, addicted wholly to pleaſures, and delights; a hater of learning, a profeſt enemy to Liberty, and Truth; careleſs,

and

and unmindful of the common concerns, taking all the measures of Justice and Honesty from the false beam of Self-interest, and Advantage. After this, hang about his neck a *gold-chain*, for an intimation, that he ought to have all virtues *linked* together; then set a *Crown* of Gold, and Jewels on his head, for a token, that he ought to overtop, and *outshine* others in all commendable qualifications. Next, put into his hand a Royal *Scepter*, for a symbol of Justice, and Integrity. Lastly, cloath him with *Purple*, for an Hieroglyphick of a *tender love*, and affection to the Common-wealth. If a Prince should look upon this Pourtraicture, and draw a comparison between That, and Himself, certainly he would be ashamed of his Ensigns of Majesty, and be afraid of being laughed out of them.

Next to *Kings* themselves may come their *Courtiers*, who, though they are for the most part a base, servile, cringing, low-spirited sort of Flatterers, yet they look big, swell great, and have high thoughts of their honour, and grandeur. Their confidence appears upon all occasions; yet in this one thing they are very modest, in that they are content to adorn their *bodies* with Gold, Jewels, Purple, and other glorious Ensigns of Virtue, and Wisdom, but leave their *minds* empty, and unfraught; and taking the *resemblance* of Goodness to themselves, turn over the *truth* and reality of it to others. They think themselves mighty happy, in that they can call the King Master, and be allowed the familiarity of talking with him; that they can volubly rehearse his se-

veral Titles of *August Highness*, *Supereminent Excellence*, and *Most Serene Majesty*; that they can boldly usher in any discourse, and that they have the compleat knack of insinuation, and flattery; for these are the Arts, that make them truly Gentile, and Noble. If you make a stricter enquiry after their other endowments, you shall find them meer Sots, and Dolts. They'l *sleep* generally till Noon, and then their mercenary *Chaplains* shall come to their bed-side, and entertain them perhaps with a short Morning *Prayer*: As soon as they are *dress't*, they must go to *Break-fast*, and when That is done, immediately to *Dinner*: When the Cloath is taken away, then to *Cards*, *Dice*, *Tables*, or some such like diversion. After this, they must have one or two Afternoon *Banquets*, and so in the Evening to *Supper*. When they have supp'd, then begins the game of *Drinking*; the Bottles are marshall'd, the Glasses ranked, and round go the Healths, and Bumpers, till they are carried up to *Bed*. And this is the constant method of passing away their hours, days, months, years, and ages. I have many times took great satisfaction by standing in the Court, and seeing how the tawdry Butterflies vie upon one another: The Ladies shall measure the *height* of their *Honours* by the length of their *Trails*, which must be bore up by a *Page* behind. The Nobles justle one another to get neareſt to the King's elbow, and wear Gold chains of that weight, and bigness, as require no less strength to *carry*, than they do wealth to *purchase*.

And now for some reflexions upon *Popes*, *Cardinals*,

Cardinals, and *Bishops*, who in pomp and splendour have almost equall'd, if not out-gone secular Princes. Now if any one consider, that their upper *Crotchet* of white Linnen is to signifie their *unspotted purity, and innocence*; That their forked *Mitres*, with both divisions tied together by the same knot, are to denote the *joynt* knowledge of the *Old*, and *New Testament*; That their always wearing *Gloves*, represents the keeping their *hands* clean, and undefiled from lucre, and covetousness; That their *Pastoral staff* implies the care of a *Flock* committed to their *charge*; That the *Cross* carried before them, expresses their *victory* over all carnal affections: He (I say) that considers this, and much more of like nature, must needs conclude, They are intrusted with a very weighty, and difficult office. But alass, They think it sufficient, if they can but *feed themselves*, and as to their *Flock*, either commend them to the care of *Christ* himself, or commit them to the guidance of some inferiour *Vicars*, and *Curates*; not so much as remmembring, what their name of *Bishop* imports, to wit, *Labour*, *Pains*, and *Diligence*, but by base Simoniacal contracts They are in a profane sense *Episcopi*, i. e. *Overseers* of their own Gain, and Income.

So *Cardinals* in like manner, if they did but consider, that the Church supposes them to succeed in the room of the *Apostles*; That therefore they must behave themselves as their *Predecessors*, and so not be *Lords*, but *Dispensers* of Spiritual gifts, of the disposal whereof they must one day render a strict account: or if they would but reflect a little on their

Habit, and thus reason with themselves: what means this *white* upper garment, but only an unspotted *innocence*? What signifies my inner *Purple*, but only an ardent love, and *zeal* to God? What imports my outermost *Pall*, so wide, and long, that it covers the whole Mule when I ride, nay would be big enough to cover a Camel, but only a *Diffusive Charity*, that should spread it self for a succour, and protection to all, by Teaching, Exhorting, Comforting, Reproving, Admonishing, Composing of differences, Courageously withstanding wicked Princes, and Sacrificing for the safety of our flock our Life, and Bloud, as well as our Wealth, and Riches; though indeed *Riches* ought not to be at all possess'd by such, as boast themselves Successours to the Apostles, who were poor, needy, and destitute: I say, if they did but lay these considerations to heart, they would never be so ambitious of being *created* to this Honour; they would willingly *resign* it when conferr'd upon them, or at least would be as industrious, watchful, and laborious, as the primitive Apostles were.

Now as to the *Popes* of *Rome*, who pretend themselves *Christ's Vicars*, if They would but imitate his Exemplary Life, in the being improved in an unintermitted course of *Preaching*; in the being attended with Poverty, Nakednels, Hunger, and a Contempt of this world; if they did but consider the import of the word *Pope*, which signifies a *Father*, or if they did but practise their Sirname of *Most Holy*, What order, or degrees of men would be in a worse condition? There would

be then no such vigorous making of parties, and buying of Votes in the *Conclave* upon a vacancy of that *See*; And those who by Bribery, or other indirect courses, should get themselves elected, would never secure their sitting firm in the Chair by pistol, poyson, force, and violence. How much of their pleasure would be abated, if they were but endowed with one dram of Wisdom? *Wisdom* did I say? nay, with one grain of that *Salt*, which our Saviour bid them not loose the savour of: All their Riches, all their Honours, their Jurisdictions, their *Peter*'s Patrimony, their Offices, their Dispensations, their Licenses, their Indulgences, their long Train, and Attendants, (see in how short a compass I have abbreviated all their marketing of Religion,) in a word, all their Perquisites will be forfeited, and lost; and in their room would succeed Watchings, Fastings, Tears, Prayers, Sermons, hard Studies, Repenting Sighs, and a thousand such like severe Penalties: Nay, what's yet more deplorable, it would then follow, that all their Clerks, Amanuenses, Notaries, Advocates, Proctors, Secretaries, the offices of Grooms, Ostlers, Serving-men, Pimps, (and somewhat else, which for modesty sake I shall not mention,) in short, all those troops of Attendants, which depend on his Holiness, would all loose their several Employments. This indeed would be hard, but what yet remains, would be more dreadful: The very Head of the Church, the Spiritual Prince, would then be brought from all his *splendour* to the poor equipage of a *Scrip*, and *Staff*. But all this is upon the supposition only,

ly, that they understood what circumstances they are placed in, whereas now, by a wholsom *neglect* of *thinking*, they live as well as heart can wish. Whatever of *toil*, and drudgery belongs to their office, That they assign over to St. *Peter*, or St. *Paul*, who have time enough to mind it; but if there be any thing of *pleasure*, and grandeur, That they assume to themselves, as being hereunto called: So that by my influence no sort of people live more to their own ease, and content. They think to satisfie that Master they pretend to serve, our Lord and Saviour, with their great state, and magnificence, with the ceremonies of Instalments, with the titles of Reverence, and Holiness, and with exercising their Episcopal function only in *blessing*, and *cursing*: The working of *Miracles* is old, and out dated; to *teach* the people, is too laborious; to *interpret Scripture*, is to invade the Prerogative of the *Schoolmen*; to *pray*, is too idle; to shed *tears*, is cowardish, and unmanly; to *fast*, is too mean, and sordid; to be easie, and *familiar*, is beneath the grandeur of him, who without being sued to, and intreated, will scarce give Princes the honour of *kissing his Toe*; finally, to *die* for Religion, is too self-denying; and to be *crucified* as their *Lord of Life*, is base, and ignominious. Their only *weapons* ought to be those of the Spirit; and of these indeed they are mighty liberal, as of their *Interdicts*, their *Suspensions*, their *Denuntiations*, their *Aggravations*, their greater, and lesser *Excommunications*, and their roaring *Bulls*, that fright whomever they are thundred against; and these most Holy Fathers never

never issue them out more frequently, than against those, who at the *instigation of the Devil*, and not *having the fear of God before their eyes*, do *felonously*, and *maliciously* attempt to lessen, and impair St. *Peter's patrimony*: And though that Apostle tells our Saviour in the Gospel, i'th' name of all the other Disciples, *We have left all, and follow'd you*; yet they challenge, as *His* inheritance, Fields, Towns, Treasures, and large Dominions; for the defending whereof, inflamed with a holy zeal, they fight with fire, and sword, to the great loss and effusion of Christian bloud; thinking they are Apostolical *maintainers* of Christ's Spouse, the Church, when they have *murdered* all such as they call her enemies: though indeed the Church has no Enemies more bloudy, and tyrannical, than such impious Popes, who give Dispensations for the *not preaching* of Christ; evacuate the main design, and effect of our *Redemption*, by their pecuniary bribes, and sales; adulterate the *Gospel*, by their forc't interpretations, and undermining *Traditions*; and lastly, by their lusts, and wickedness *grieve the Holy Spirit*, and make their Saviour's wounds to *bleed anew*. Farther, when the Christian Church has been all along first planted, then confirmed, and since establish't by the *bloud of her Martyrs*; as if Christ her head would be wanting in the same methods still of protecting her, they invert the order, and propagate their Religion now by *arms*, and *violence*, which was wont formerly to be done only with *patience*, and *sufferings*. And though *war* be so brutish, as that it becomes Beasts, rather than Men; so extravagant,

vagant, that the Poets feigned it an effect of the Furies; ſo licentious, that it ſtops the courſe of all juſtice, and honeſty; ſo deſperate, that it is beſt waged by Ruffians, and *Banditti*; and ſo unchriſtian, that it is contrary to the expreſs commands of the Goſpel; yet maugre All this, *Peace* is too quiet, too unactive, and they muſt be ingaged in the boiſterouſneſs of War. Among which undertaking Popes, you ſhall have ſome ſo *old*, that they can ſcarce creep, and yet they'l put on a *young* brisk *reſolution*, will reſolve to ſtick at no pains, to ſpare no coſt, nor to wave any inconvenience, ſo they may involve Laws, Religion, Peace, and all other concerns, whether ſacred, or civil, in unappeaſable tumults, and diſtractions. And yet ſome of their learned fawning Courtiers will interpret this notorious madneſs for zeal, and piety, and fortitude, having found out the way how a man may draw his ſword, and ſheath it in his Brother's bowels, and yet not offend againſt the duty of the *ſecond Table*, whereby we are obliged to *love our Neighbours as our ſelves*. It is yet uncertain, whether theſe *Romiſh Fathers* have taken Example from, or given Preſident to ſuch other *German Biſhops*, who omitting their Eccleſtical Habit, and other ceremonies, appear openly armed Cap a pe, like ſo many Champions, and Warriours, thinking no doubt that they come ſhort of the duty of their Function, if they die in any other place than the open field, fighting the *Battails of the Lord*. The inferiour Clergy deeming it unmannerly not to conform to their Patrons, and Dioceſans, devoutly

tugg,

ſtugg, and fight for their Tithes with Syllogiſms, and Arguments, as fiercely as with ſwords, ſticks, ſtones, or any thing that came next to hand. When they read the Rabbies, Fathers, or other ancient writings, how quick-ſighted are they in ſpying out any Sentences, that they may fright the people with, and make them believe, that *more* than the *Tenth* is due, paſſing by whatever they meet with in the ſame Authors, that minds them of the Duty, and Difficulty of their own Office. They never conſider, that their *ſhaven crown* is a token, that they ſhould *pare off*, and *cut away* all the ſuperfluous luſts of this world, and give themſelves wholly to Divine Meditation; but inſtead of this our bald-pated Prieſts think they have done enough, if they do but mumble over ſuch a ſardle of Prayers: which it is a wonder if God ſhould hear, or underſtand, when they whiſper them ſo ſoftly, and in ſo unknown a language, which they can ſcarce hear, or underſtand themſelves. This they have in common with other Mechanicks, that they are moſt ſubtle in the craft of getting Mony, and wonderfully skill'd in their reſpective dues of Tithes, Offerings, Perquiſites, *&c.* Thus they are All content to reap the *profit*, but as to the *burden*, That they toſs as a ball from one hand to another, and aſſign it over to any they can get or hire: For as Secular Princes have their Judges, and ſubordinate Miniſters, to act in their name, and ſupply their ſtead; ſo Eccleſiaſtical Governers have their Deputies, Vicars, and Curates, nay many times turn over the whole care of Religion to the Laity. The Laity,

ſuppoſing they have nothing to do with the Church (as if their Baptiſmal Vow did not initiate them members of it) make it over to the Prieſts; of the Prieſts again, Thoſe that are *Secular*, thinking their Title implies them to be a little too profane, aſſign this Task over to the *Regulars*; the *Regulars* to the *Monks*; the *Monks* bandy it from one Order to another, till it light upon the *Mendicants*; They lay it upon the *Carthuſians*, which Order alone keeps Honeſty and Piety among them, but really keep them *ſo cloſe*, that no body ever yet could *ſee* them. Thus the *Popes*, thruſting only their Sickle into the *harveſt* of Profit, leave all the other toil of Spiritual *Huſbandry* to the *Biſhops*, the Biſhops beſtow it upon the *Paſtors*, the Paſtors on their *Curates*, and their Curates commit it to the *Mendicants*, who return it again to ſuch, as well know how to make good advantage of the *Flock* by the benefit of their *Fleece*.

But I would not be thought purpoſely to expoſe the weakneſſes of Popes, and Prieſts, leaſt I ſhould ſeem to recede from my Title, and make a *Satyr* inſtead of a *Panegyrick*: Nor let any one imagine, that I reflect on good Princes, by commending of bad ones: I did This only in brief to ſhew, That there is no one particular perſon can lead a comfortable life, except he be entred of my Society, and retain me for his Friend. Nor indeed can it be otherwiſe, ſince Fortune, that Empreſs of the world, is ſo much in league, and amity with Me, that to *Wiſe men* ſhe is always ſtingy, and ſparing of her gifts, but is profuſely

liberal

liberal, and lavish to *Fools*. Thus *Timotheus*, the *Athenian* Commander, in all his Expeditions was a mirrour of good luck, because he was a little *underwitted*; from him was occasioned the *Grecian* Proverb, ἡ εὕδοντος κύρτος αἱρεῖ, *the Net fills, though the Fisherman sleeps*: There is also another favourable Proverb, Γλαὺξ ἵπτεται, *the Owl flies*, an Omen of success. But against Wise men are pointed these ill-aboding Proverbs, Ἐν τετράδι γεννηθέντες, *Born under a bad Planet*; Equum habet Sejanum, *He cannot ride the Forehorse*; Aurum Tholosanum, *Ill-gotten goods will never prosper*, and more to the same purpose. But I forbear from any farther *Proverbializing*, lest I should be thought to have rifled my *Erasmus's Adagies*. To return therefore, Fortune we find still favouring the blunt, and flushing the forward; stroaks, and smooths up Fools, crowning all their undertakings with success: But Wisdom makes her followers bashful, sneaking, and timerous, and therefore you commonly see, that they are reduc'd to hard shifts, must grapple with poverty, cold, and hunger, must lie recluse, despised, and unregarded; while Fools role in money, are advanc'd to dignities, and offices, and in a word have the whole world at command. If any one think it happy to be a Favourite at *Court*, and to manage the disposal of Places, and Preferments; alass This happiness is so far from being attainable by Wisdom, that the very suspition of it wonld put a stop to all advancement. Has any man a mind to raise himself a *good Estate*? Alass, what dealer in the world would ever get a farthing, if he be so wise

as to ſcruple at Perjury, bluſh at a Lie, or ſtick at any fraud, and over-reaching.

Farther, does any one appear a Candidate for any *Eccleſiaſtical Dignity?* Why, an Aſs, or a Plough-Jobber, ſhall ſooner gain it than a Wiſe man. Again, are you in *love* with any handſom Lady? Alas, women-kind are ſo addicted to Folly, that they will not at all liſten to the Courtſhip of a wiſe Suitour. Finally, wherever there is any preparation made for mirth, and jollity, all Wiſe men are ſure to be excluded the company, leſt they ſhould ſtint the joy, and damp the frollick. In a word, to what ſide ſoever we turn our ſelves, to Popes, Princes, Judges, Magiſtrates, Friends, Enemies, Rich, or Poor, all their concerns are managed by *money*, which becauſe it is undervalued by wiſe men, therefore, in revenge to be ſure, it never comes at Them.

But now, though my Praiſe, and commendation might well be endleſs, yet it is requiſite I ſhould put ſome period to my Speech. I'le therefore draw toward an end, when I have firſt confirm'd what I have ſaid by the *authority* of ſeveral *Authors*. Which way of farther proof I ſhall inſiſt upon, partly that I may not be thought to have ſaid more in my own behalf, than what will be juſtified by others; and partly, that the Lawyers may not check me for citing no Preſidents, nor Allegations. To imitate them therefore, I will produce ſome Reports, and Authorities, though perhaps, like Theirs too, they are nothing to the purpoſe.

First

First then, it is confeſt almoſt to a Proverb, that the Art of *Diſſembling* is a very neceſſary accompliſhment; and therefore it is a common Verſe among School-boys,

Stultitiam ſimulare loco ſapientia ſumma eſt.

To feign the Fool, when fit occaſions riſe,
Argues the being more completely wiſe.

It is eaſie therefore to collect, how great a value ought to be put upon *real* Folly, when the very *ſhadow*, and bare imitation of it, is ſo much eſteem'd. *Horace*, who in his Epiſtles thus ſtiles himſelf,

Me pinguem & nitidum----
-----Epicuri *de grege Porcum*,

My ſleek-skinn'd corps as ſmooth, as if I lie
'Mong th' fatted Swine of *Epicurus* Sty:

This Poet (I ſay) gives this advice in one of his Odes,

Miſce Stultitiam conſiliis brevem:

Short Folly with your counſels mix.

The Epithete of *ſhort*, it is true, is a little improper. The ſame Poet again has this paſſage elſewhere,

Dulce eſt deſipere in loco,

Well-timed Folly has a ſweet reliſh

And

And in another place,

——Mallem delirus inersque videri,
Quam sapere & ringi.——

I'd rather much be censur'd for a fool,
Than feel the lash and smart of Wisdoms school.

Homer praises *Telemachus* as much as any one of his *Heroes*, and yet he gives him the Epithete of Νήπιος, *Silly*: and the *Grecians* generally use the same word to express *Children*, as a token of their Innocence. And what is the Argument of all *Homer*'s Iliads, but only as *Horace* observes,

Stultorum Regum, & Populorum continet æstus,

They Kings, and Subjects dotages contain?

How positive also is *Tullies* Commendation, That *all places are fill'd with Fools*? now every *Excellence* being to be measured by its *Extent*, the goodness of Folly must be of as large compass, as those universal places she reaches to. But perhaps Christians may slight the authority of a Heathen, I could therefore, if I pleased, back and confirm the truth hereof by the citations of several Texts of *Scripture*; though herein it were perhaps my duty to beg leave of the Divines, that I might so far intrench upon their Prerogative. Supposing a grant, the task seems so difficult, as to require the invocation of some aid, and assistance: yet, because it is unreasonable to put the Muses to the trouble

trouble and expence of ſo tedious a journey; eſpecially ſince the buſineſs is out of their ſphere; I ſhall chooſe rather (while I am acting the Divine, and venturing in their Polemick difficulties) to wiſh my ſelf for ſuch time animated with *Scotus* his briſtling and prickly ſoul, which I would not care, how afterwards it returned to his body, though for refinement it were ſtopped at a Purgatory by the way. I cannot but wiſh, that I might wholly change my character, or at leaſt that ſome grave Divine in my ſtead might rehearſe this part of the ſubject for me: for truly I ſuſpect, that ſome body will accuſe me for plundring the Cloſets of thoſe Reverend men, while I pretend to ſo much of Divinity, as muſt appear in my following diſcourſe. Yet however it may not ſeem ſtrange, that after ſo long and frequent a converſe, I have gleaned ſome ſcraps from the Divines; ſiince *Horace* his *wooden God*, by hearing his Maſter read *Homer*, learned ſome words of *Greek*; and *Lucian*'s *Cock*, by long attention, could readily *underſtand* what any man ſpoke. But now to the purpoſe, wiſhing my ſelf ſucceſs.

Eccleſiaſtes doth ſomewhere confeſs, that there are an *infinite number of Fools*; now when he ſpeaks of an *infinite number*, what does he elſe but imply, that herein is included the *whole race of Mankind*, except ſome very few, which I know not whether ever any one had yet the happineſs to ſee? The Prophet *Jeremy* ſpeaks yet more plainly in his *tenth* Chapter, where he ſaith, That *every man is brutiſh in his knowledge*. He juſt before attributes Wiſdom to God alone, ſaying, That *the*

wiſe

wise men of the Nations are altogether brutish, and foolish. And in the preceding Chapter he gives this seasonable caution, *Let not the Wise man glory in his wisdom*: the reason is obvious, bacause no man hath truly any, whereof to glory. But to return to *Ecclesiastes*, when he saith, *vanity of vanities, all is vanity*, what else can we imagine his meaning to be, than that our whole Life is nothing but one continued interlude of Folly? This confirms that assertion of *Tully*, which is delivered in that noted passage we but just now mentioned, namely, That *all places swarm with Fools.* Farther, what does the Son of *Sirach* mean, when he saith in *Ecclesiasticus*, that the *Fool is changed as the Moon*, while the *Wise man is fix'd as the Sun*, than only to hint out the folly of all Mankind, and that the name of Wise is due to no other but the All-wise God? For all Interpreters by *Moon* understand *Mankind*, and by *Sun*, that fountain of all Light, the *Almighty*. The same sense is implied in that saying of our Saviour in the Gospel, *There is none Good but One, that is God*: for if whoever is not *Wise* be consequently a *Fool*, and if, according to the Stoicks, every man be *Wise*, so far only as he is *Good*, the meaning of the Text must be, All mortals are unavoidably *Fools*, and there is none *Wise* but *One*, that is *God*. *Solomon* also, in the fifteenth Chapter of his Proverbs, hath this expression, *Folly is joy to him that is destitute of Wisdom*; plainly intimating, that the Wise man is attended with grief, and vexation, while the Foolish only role in delight, and pleasure. To the same purpose is that saying of his, in the first

Chap-

Chapter of *Eccleſiaſtes*: *In much wiſdom is much grief, and he that increaſeth knowledge, increaſeth ſorrow.* Again, it is confeſs'd by the ſame Preacher, in the ſeventh Chapter of the ſame Book, That *the heart of the Wiſe is in the houſe of mourning, but the heart of Fools is in the houſe of mirth.* This Author himſelf had never attained to ſuch a portion of Wiſdom if he had not applied himſelf to a ſearching out the frailties, and infirmities of Humane nature; as, if you believe not me, may appear from his own words, in his firſt Chapter, *I gave my heart to know Wiſdom, and to know Madneſs and Folly*: where it is worthy to be obſerved, that, as to the order of words, *Folly*, for its advantage, is put in the *laſt* place. Thus *Eccleſiaſtes* wrot, and thus indeed did an *Eccleſiaſtical* method require, namely, that what has the *precedence* in dignity, ſhould come *hindmoſt* in rank, and order, according to the tenour of that Evangelical Precept, *The Laſt ſhall be Firſt, and the Firſt ſhall be Laſt.* And in *Eccleſiaſticus* likewiſe, (whoever was Author of the holy Book which bears that name) in the forty fourth chapter, the excellency of Folly above Wiſdom is poſitively acknowledg'd: The very words I ſhall not cite, till I have the advantage of an anſwer to a queſtion I am propoſing, this way of interrogating being frequently made uſe of by *Plato*, in his Dialogues between *Socrates*, and other Diſputants. I ask you then, What is it we uſually hoard, and lock up, Things of greater eſteem, and value, or thoſe which are more common, trite, and deſpicable? Why are you ſo backward in

ing an answer? Since you are so shy, and reserv'd, I'le take the Greek Proverb for a satisfactory Reply, namely, τὴν ἐπὶ θύραις ὑδρίαν, *foul water is thrown down the Sink*: which Saying, that no person may slight it, may be convenient to advertise, That it comes from no meaner an Author than, that Oracle of Truth, *Aristotle* himself. And indeed there is no one on this side Bedlam so mad, as to throw out upon the dunghil his Gold, and Jewels, but rather all persons have a close Repository to preserve them in, and secure them under all the locks, bolts, and bars, that either Art can contrive, or Fears suggest: whereas the Dirt, Pebbles, and Oyster-shels, that lie scattered in the streets, ye trample upon, pass by, and take no notice of. If then what is *more* valuable be *coffer'd up*, and what *less* so, lyes *unregarded*; it follows, that accordingly Folly should meet with a greater esteem than Wisdom, because that wise Author advises us to the *keeping close*, and concealing the first, and exposing, or *laying open* the other: As, take him now in his own words, *Better is he that hideth his Folly, than him that hideth his Wisdom.* Beside, the Sacred Text does oft ascribe Innocence, and Sincerity to Fools, while the Wise man is apt to be a haughty scorner of all such, as he thinks, or censures to have less wit than himself: For so I understand that passage in the tenth Chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, *When he that is a Fool walketh by the way, his Wisdom faileth him, and he saith to every one that He is a Fool.* Now what greater argument of candor or ingenuity can there be, than to demean your self

equal

equal with all others, and not think their deserts any way inferiour to his own. Folly is no such scandalous Attribute, but that the wise *Agur* was not ashamed to confess it in the thirtieth Chapter of *Proverbs*: *Surely* (saith he) *I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.* Nay, St. *Paul* himself, that great Doctor of the Gentiles, writing to his *Corinthians*, readily owns the name, saying, *If any man speak as a Fool, I more*; as if to have been *less so*, had been a *reproach*, and *disgrace*. But perhaps I may be censured for mis-interpreting this Text by some modern Annotators, who like Crows pecking at one anothers eyes, find fault, and correct all that went before them, and pretend each their own Glosses to contain the only, true, and genuine explication; among whom my *Erasmus* (whom I cannot but mention with respect) may challenge the second place, if not the precedency. This citation (say they) is purely impertinent; the meaning of the Apostle is far different from what you dream of: he would not have these words so understood, as if he desired to be thought a greater Fool than the rest, but only when he had before said, *Are they Ministers of Christ, so am I*: As if the equalling himself herein to others had been too little, he adds, *I am more*, thinking a bare *equality* not enough, unless he were even *superiour* to those he compares himself with. This he would have to be believed as true; yet lest it might be thought offensive, as bordering too much on arrogance, and conceit, he tempers, and alleviates it by the covert of Folly. *I speak* (says

he) *as a Fool*, knowing it to be the peculiar privilege of Fools to ſpeak the truth without giving offence. But what St. *Paul*'s thoughts were when he wrot this, I leave for them to determine. In my own judgment at leaſt, I prefer the opinion of the good old tun-bellied Divines, with whom 'tis ſafer, and more creditable to err, than to be in the right with ſmattering, raw Novices.

Not indeed ſhould any one mind the late Criticks any more, than the ſenſleſs chattering of a Daw: eſpecially ſince one of the moſt eminent of them (whoſe name I adviſedly conceal, leſt ſome of our Wits ſhould be taunting him with the Greek Proverb, Ὄνος πρὸς λύρην, *Ad Lyram Aſinus*) magiſterially, and dogmatically deſcanting upon this Text, [*Are they the Miniſters of Chriſt, (I ſpeak as a Fool) I am more*] makes a diſtinct Chapter, and (which without good ſtore of Logick he could never have done) adds a new Section, and then gives this Paraphraſe, which I ſhall *verbatim* recite, that you may have his *words*, *Materially*, as well as *Formally*, his *ſenſe*, (for that's one of their babling diſtinctions.) [*I ſpeak as a Fool*] that is, If the equalling my ſelf to thoſe falſe Apoſtles would have been conſtrued as the vaunt of a Fool, I will willingly be accounted a greater Fool, by taking place of them, and openly pleading, That as to their Miniſtry I not only come up even with them, but out-ſtrip, and go beyond them: Though this ſame Commentator a little after, as it were forgetting what he had juſt before delivered, tacks about,

Nic. Lyra.

about, and shifts to another interpretation.

But why do I insist upon any one particular Example, when in general it is the publick character of all Divines to mould, and bend the sacred Oracles, till they comply with their own fancy, spreading them (as Heaven by its Creator) like a *Curtain*, closing together, or drawing them back, as they please? Thus indeed St. *Paul* himself minces, and mangles some citations he makes use of, and seems to wrest them to a different sense, from what they were first intended for, as is confess'd by the great Linguist St. *Hierom*. Thus when that Apostle saw at *Athens* the Inscription of an Altar, he draws from it an argument for the proof of the Christian Religion; but leaving out great part of the sentence, which perhaps, if fully recited, might have prejudiced his cause, he mentions only the two last words, *viz. To the unknown God*; and this too not without alteration, for the whole Inscription runs thus: *To the Gods of Asia, Europe, and Africa, To all foreign, and unknown Gods.*

'Tis in imitation of the same pattern, I'le warrant you, that our young Divines, by leaving out four or five words in a place, and putting a false construction on the rest, can make any passage serviceable to their own purpose; though from the coherence of what went before, or follows after, the genuine meaning appears to be either wide enough, or perhaps quite contradictory to what they would thrust, and impose upon it. In which knack the Divines are grown now so expert, that the Lawyers themselves begin to be jealous of an

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encroachment on what was formally their ſole priviledge, and practice. And indeed, what can they deſpair of proving, ſince the fore-mentioned Commentator (I had almoſt blundred out his name, but that I am reſtrained by fear of the ſame *Greek* Proverbial Sarcaſm) did upon a Text of St. *Luke* put an interpretation, no more agreeable to the meaning of the place, than one contrary quality is to another? The Paſſage is This; when *Judas*'s treachery was preparing to be executed, and accordingly it ſeem'd requiſite, that all the Diſciples ſhould be provided to guard, and ſecure their aſſaulted Maſter, our Saviour, that he might piouſly caution them againſt reliance for his delivery on any worldly ſtrength, asks them, whether in all their Embaſſy *they lacked any thing*, when he had ſent them out ſo unfurniſhed for the performance of a long journey, that they had not ſo much as *Shoos* to defend their feet from the injuries of flints, and thorns, or a *Scrip*, to carry a meals meat in; and when they had anſwered, that they lacked *nothing*, He adds, *But now he that hath a purſe let him take it, and likewiſe a ſcrip, and he that hath no ſword, let him ſell his garment, and buy one*: Now when the whole doctrine of our Saviour inculcates nothing more frequently than Meekneſs, Patience, and a contempt of this world, is it not plain, what the meaning of the place is? Namely, that he might now diſmiſs his Embaſſadours in a more naked, defenſleſs condition, he does not onely adviſe them to take no thought for ſhoos, or ſcrip, but even commands them to part with the very

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cloaths from their back, that ſo they might have the leſs incumbrance, and entanglement, in the going through their office, and function. He cautions them, it is true, to be furniſhed with a Sword, yet not ſuch a carnal one, as Rogues, and High-way men make uſe of for murder, and bloudſhed, but with the *ſword of the Spirit*, which pierces through the heart, and ſearches out the innermoſt retirements of the ſoul, lopping off all our luſt, and corrupt affections, and leaving nothing in poſſeſſion of our breaſt but piety, zeal, and devotion: This (I ſay) in my opinion is the moſt natural interpretation. But ſee how that Divine miſ-underſtands the place: By *Sword* (ſays he) is meant *Defence* againſt *Perſecution*; by *Scrip*, or *Purſe*, a ſufficient quantity of *Proviſion*; as if Chriſt had, by conſidering better of it, changed his mind, in reference to that mean equipage, which he had before ſent his Diſciples in, and therefore came now to a recantation of what he had formerly inſtituted: Or, as if he had forgot what in time paſt he had told them, *Bleſſed are you when men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, and ſay all manner of evil againſt you for my ſake. Render not evil for evil*, for *bleſſed are the Meek*, not the Cruel: As if he had forgot that he encouraged them by the examples of *Sparrows*, and *Lillies*, to take no thought *for the Morrow*, he gives them now another Leſſon, and charges them, rather than go *without a ſword*, to *ſell their garment, and buy one*; as if the going cold, and naked, were more excuſable than the marching unarmed. And as this Author thinks all means, which are requi-

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ſite for the prevention, or retaliation of injuries, to be implied under the name of *Sword*, ſo under that of *Scrip*, he would have every thing to be comprehended, which either the neceſſity, or conveniency of Life requires.

Thus does this provident Commentator furniſh out the Diſciples with Halberts, Spears, and Guns, for the enterpriſe of *preaching Chriſt crucified*; He ſupplies them at the ſame time with Pockets, Bags, and Portmanteaus, that they might carry their *Cupboards* as well as their *Bellies* always about them: He takes no notice, how our Saviour afterwards rebukes *Peter* for *drawing* that ſword, which he had juſt before ſo ſtrictly charg'd him to *buy*; nor that it is ever recorded, that the Primitive Chriſtians did by no ways withſtand their Heathen Perſecutors otherwiſe than with tears, and prayers, which they would have exchanged more effectually for ſwords, and bucklers, if they had thought this Text would have bore them out.

There is Another, and he of no mean credit, whom for reſpect to his perſon I ſhall forbear to name, who commenting upon that verſe in the Prophet *Habakkuk*, [*I ſaw the tents of* Cuſhan *in affliction, and the Curtains of the land of* Midian *did tremble,*] becauſe *Tents* were ſometimes made of *Skins*, he pretended, that the word *Tents* did here ſignify the *skin of St. Bartholomew*, who was flead for a Martyr.

I my ſelf was lately at a Divinity Diſputation, (where I very often pay my attendance) where one of the Opponents demanded a reaſon,

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Why it ſhould be thought more proper to ſilence all *Heretick*s by *Sword*, and *Faggot*, rather than convert them by *moderate*, and *ſober arguments*? A certain Cynical, old Blade, who bore the character of a Divine, legible in the frowns, and wrinkles of his face, not without a great deal of diſdain, anſwered; That it was the expreſs Injunction of St. *Paul* himſelf, in thoſe Directions to *Titus*, [*A man that is an Heretick, after the firſt and ſecond Admonition, Reject,*] quoting it in Latin, where the word *Reject*, is *Devita*, while all the Auditory wondred at this Citation, and deem'd it no way applicable to his purpoſe. He at laſt explain'd himſelf, ſaying, That *Devita* ſignified, *De vitâ tollendum Hereticum*, A Heretick muſt be ſlain. Some ſmiled at his ignorance, but others approved of it, as an Orthodox Comment. And however ſome diſliked, that ſuch violence ſhould be done to ſo eaſie a Text, our hair-ſlitting, and irrefragable Doctor went on in triumph: To prove it yet (ſays he) more undeniably, it is commanded in the old Law, [*Thou ſhalt not ſuffer a Witch to live*;] Now then, Every *Maleficus*, or *Witch* is to be kill'd, but an Heretick is *Maleficus*, which in the Latin Tranſlation is put for a *Witch*, *Ergo* &c. All that were preſent wondred at the ingenuity of the perſon, and very devoutly embraced his Opinion; never dreaming, that the Law was reſtrained only to Magicians, Sorcerers, and Enchanters: for otherwiſe, if the word *Maleficus* ſignified what it moſt naturally implies, every Evil doer, then Drunkenneſs, and Whoredom, were to meet with the

ſame capital puniſhment as Witchcraft. But why ſhould I ſquander away my time in a too tedious proſecuting of this Topick, which, if drove on to the utmoſt, would afford talk to eternity? I aim herein at no more than this, namely, That ſince thoſe grave Doctors take ſuch a ſwinging range, and latitude, I, who am but a ſmattering Novice in Divinity, may have the larger allowance for any ſlips, or miſtakes.

Now therefore I return to St. *Paul*, who uſes theſe expreſſions, [*Ye ſuffer fools gladly,*] applying it to himſelf; and again, [*As a fool receive me,*] and [*That which I ſpeak, I ſpeak not after the Lord, but as it were Fooliſhly;* and in another place, [*We are Fools for Chriſt's ſake*:] See how theſe commendations of Folly are equal to the Author of them, both great, and ſacred. The ſame holy perſon does yet enjoyn, and command the being a Fool as a virtue, of all other moſt requiſite, and neceſſary: for ſays he, [*If any man ſeem to be wiſe in this world, let him become a Fool, that he may be wiſe.*] Thus St. *Luke* records, how our Saviour, after his reſurrection, joyning himſelf with two of his Diſciples travelling to *Emmaus*, at his firſt ſalutation he calls them Fools, ſaying, [*O Fools, and ſlow of heart to believe.*] Nor may this ſeem ſtrange in compariſon to what is yet farther delivered by St. *Paul*, who adventures to attribute ſomething of Folly even to the All-wiſe God himſelf, [*The Fooliſhneſs of God* (ſays he) *is wiſer than Men*: In which Text St. *Origen* would not have the word *Fooliſhneſs* any way referr'd to men, or applicable to the ſame ſenſe, wherein is to be underſtood

derſtood that other paſſage of St. *Paul*, [*The preaching of the Croſs to them that periſh, fooliſhneſs.*] But why do I put my ſelf to the trouble of citing ſo many proofs, ſince this one may ſuffice for all, namely, That in thoſe myſtical Pſalms, wherein *David* repreſents the Type of *Chriſt*, it is there acknowledged by our Saviour, in way of confeſſion, that even He himſelf was guilty of Folly, *Thou* (ſays he) *O God know'ſt my fooliſhneſs?* Nor is it without ſome reaſon, that Fools for their plainneſs, and ſincerity of heart, have always been moſt acceptable to God Almighty. For as the Princes of this world have ſhrewdly ſuſpected, and carried a jealous eye over ſuch of their Subjects as were the moſt obſervant, and deepeſt Politicians, (for thus *Ceſar* was afraid of the plodding *Caſſius*, and *Brutus*, thinking himſelf ſecure enough from the careleſs drinking *Anthony*; *Nero* likewiſe miſtruſted *Seneca*, and *Dionyſius* would have been willingly rid of *Plato*) whereas they can all put greater confidence in ſuch as are of leſs ſubtlety, and contrivance. So our Saviour in like manner diſlikes and condemns the wiſe, and crafty, as St. *Paul* does expreſly declare in theſe words, *God hath choſen the fooliſh Things of the world*; and again, *It pleaſed God by Fooliſhneſs to ſave the world*, implying, that by *Wiſdom* it could never have been *ſaved*. Nay God himſelf teſtifies as much, when he ſpeaks by the mouth of his Prophet, *I will deſtroy the wiſdom of the Wiſe, and bring to nought the underſtanding of the Learned.* Again, our Saviour does ſolemnly return his Father thanks, for that he had *hidden the myſteries of*

ſalvation from the Wiſe, and reveal'd them to Babes, i, e. to Fools; for the original word νηπιοις being oppoſed to σοφοῖς, if one ſignifie *Wiſe*, the other muſt *Fooliſh*. To the ſame purpoſe did our bleſſed Lord frequently condemn and upbraid the Scribes, Phariſees, and Lawyers, while he carries himſelf kind and obliging to the unlearned multitude: For what other can be the meaning of that tart Denuntiation, *Wo unto you Scribes, and Phariſees*, than, Wo unto you Wiſe men, whereas he ſeems chiefly delighted with children, women, and illiterate Fiſhermen?

We may farther take notice, that among all the ſeveral kinds of Brute creatures, he ſhews greateſt liking to ſuch as are fartheſt diſtant from the ſubtlety of the Fox. Thus in his progreſs to *Jeruſalem* he choſe to ride ſitting upon an *Aſs*, though, if he pleaſed, he might have mounted the back of a *Lion* with more of State, and as little of danger. The *Holy Spirit* choſe rather likewiſe to deſcend from Heaven in the ſhape of a ſimple gall-leſs *Dove*, than in that of an *Eagle*, Kite, or other more *lofty Fowl*.

Thus all along in the Holy Scriptures there are frequent Metaphors, and Similitudes of the moſt inoffenſive creatures, ſuch as *Stags*, *Hinds*, *Lambs*, and the like. Nay thoſe bleſſed Souls, that in the day of Judgment are to be plac'd at our Saviour's right hand, are call'd *Sheep*, which are the moſt ſenſleſs, and ſtupid of all cattle, as is evidenc'd by *Ariſtotle*'s Greek Proverb, προβάτου νοῦς, a *ſheepiſhneſs of temper*, *i.e.* a dull, blockiſh, ſleepy, unmanly humour. Yet of ſuch a *Flock* Chriſt is not aſhamed

aſhamed to profeſs himſelf the *Shepherd*: nay, he would not only have all his Proſelytes termed *Sheep*, but even He himſelf would be call'd a *Lamb*; as when *John* the Baptiſt ſeeth *Jeſus* coming unto him, he ſaith, *Behold the Lamb of God*; which ſame title is very often given to our Saviour in the *Apocalypſe*.

All this amounts to no leſs, than that all mortal men are Fools, even the righteous, and godly, as well as ſinners; nay, in ſome ſenſe our bleſſed Lord himſelf, who although he was *the wiſdom of the Father*, yet to repair the infirmities of fallen Man, he became in ſome meaſure a Partaker of humane folly, when he *took our nature upon him, and was found in faſhion as a Man*, or when *God made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him*. Nor would he heal thoſe breaches our ſins had made by any other method, than by the *fooliſhneſs of the Croſs*, publiſhed by the ignorant, and unlearned Apoſtles, to whom he frequently recommends the excellence of Folly, cautioning them againſt the infectiouſneſs of Wiſdom, by the ſeveral examples he propoſes them to imitate, ſuch as *Children*, *Lilies*, *Sparrows*, *Muſtard*, and ſuch like beings, which are either wholly inanimate, or at leaſt devoid of reaſon, and ingeny, guided by no other conduct than that of inſtinct, without care, trouble, or contrivance. To the ſame intent the Diſciples were warned by their Lord and Maſter, that when they ſhould be *brought unto the Synagogues, and unto Magiſtrates, and Powers*, they ſhould *take no thought how, or what thing*

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they should answer, nor what they should say. They were again strictly forbid to *enquire into the times*, and *seasons*, or to place any confidence in their own abilities, but to depend wholly upon Divine assistance.

At the first peopling of Paradise, the Almighty had never laid so strict a charge on our Father *Adam*, to refrain from *eating of the tree of Knowledg*, except he had thereby fore warned, that the tast of Knowledge would be the bane of all Happiness. St. *Paul* says expresly, that *Knowledge puffeth up*, i. e. it is fatal, and poysonous: In pursuance whereunto St. *Bernard* interprets that *exceeding high Mountain*, whereon the Devil had erected his seat, to have been the mountain of Knowledge. And perhaps this may be another argument which ought not to be omitted, namely, That Folly is acceptable, at least excusable with the Gods, in as much as they easily pass by the heedless failures of Fools, while the miscarriages of such, as are known to have more wit, shall very hardly obtain a pardon; nay, when a wise man comes to sue for an acquitment from any guilt, he must shrowd himself under the patronage, and pretext of Folly. For thus in the Twelfth of Numbers, *Aaron* intreats *Moses* to stay the Leprosie of his Sister *Miriam*, saying, *Alas, my Lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly.* Thus when *David* spared *Saul*'s life, when he found him sleeping in a Tent of *Hachilah*, not willing to *stretch forth his hand against the Lord's Anointed*; *Saul* excuses his former severity by confessing, *Behold I have played*

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the Fool, and have erred exceedingly. *David* alſo himſelf, in much the ſame form, begs the remiſſion of his Sin from God Almighty with this prayer, *Lord, I pray thee, take away the iniquity of thy Servant, for I have done very fooliſhly*; as if he could not have hoped otherwiſe to have his pardon granted, except he petitioned for it under the covert, and mitigation of Folly. The agreeable practice of our Saviour is yet more convincing, who, when he hung upon the Croſs, prayed for his Enemies, ſaying, *Father, forgive them*, urging no other plea in their behalf than that of their Ignorance, *for they know not what they do.* To the ſame effect St. *Paul*, in his firſt Epiſtle to *Timothy*, acknowledges he had been a Blaſphemer, and a Perſecuter, *But* (ſaith he) *I obtained mercy, becauſe I did it ignorantly in unbelief.* Now what's the meaning of the phraſe, [*I did it ignorantly*] but only This? My fault was occaſioned from a miſ-informed Folly, not from a deliberate Malice. What ſignifies [*I obtained mercy,*] but only that I ſhould not otherwiſe have obtained it, had not Folly, and Ignorance been my vindication? To the ſame purpoſe is that other paſſage in the myſterious Pſalmiſt, which I forgot to mention in its proper place, namely, *Oh remember not the ſins and offences of my Youth!* The word which we render *Offences*, is in Latin, *Ignorantias*, Ignorances: Obſerve, the two things he alledges in his excuſe, are firſt his *rawneſs of Age*, to which Folly, and want of Experience are conſtant attendants; and ſecondly, his *Ignorances*, expreſſed in the Plural number, for an enhancement, and aggravation of his Fooliſhneſs.

But

But that I may not wear out this Subject too far, to draw now toward a Concluſion, it is obſervable, That the Chriſtian Religion ſeems to have ſome relation to Folly, and no alliance at all with Wiſdom. Of the truth whereof, if you deſire farther proof than my bare word, you may pleaſe, firſt, to conſider, that Children, Women, Old men, and Fools, led as it were by a ſecret impulſe of Nature, are always moſt conſtant in repairing to Church, and moſt zealous, devout, and attentive in the performance of the ſeveral parts of Divine Service: Nay, the firſt Promulgers of the Goſpel, and the firſt Converts to Chriſtianity, were men of Plainneſs, and Simplicity, wholly unacquainted with Secular Policy, or Learning.

Farther, there are none more ſilly, or nearer their wits end, than thoſe who are too ſuperſtitiouſly Religious: They are profuſely laviſh in their Charity, They invite freſh Affronts by an Eaſie forgiveneſs of paſt Injuries; They ſuffer themſelves to be cheated, and impoſed upon, by laying claim to the *Innocence* of the *Dove*; They make it the intereſt of no perſons to oblige them, becauſe they'l love, and *do good to their Enemies*, as much as to the moſt endearing Friends; They baniſh all Pleaſure, feeding upon the Penance of Watching, Faſting, Weeping, Sorrow, and Reproach; They value not their lives, but with St. *Paul wiſh to be diſſolved*, and covet the fiery tryal of Martyrdom: In a word, They ſeem altogether ſo deſtitute of common ſenſe, that their Soul ſeems already ſeparated from their dead, and unactive Body.

Body. And what elſe can we imagine all this to be than downright Madneſs? It is the leſs ſtrange therefore, that at the Feaſt of Pentecoſt, the Apoſtles ſhould be thought *drunk with new wine*, or that St. *Paul* was cenſured by *Feſtus*, to have been *beſide himſelf*.

And ſince I have had the confidence to goe thus far, I ſhall venture yet a little forwarder, and be ſo bold as to ſay thus much more: All that finall happineſs, which Chriſtians, through ſo many rubs, and briers of difficulties, contend for, is at laſt no better than a ſort of Folly, and Madneſs. This no queſtion will be thought extravagantly ſpoke; but conſider a while, and deliberately ſtate the caſe.

Firſt then, the Chriſtians ſo far agree with the *Platoniſts* as to believe, that the Body is no better than a Priſon, or Dungeon, for the confinement of the Soul. That therefore, while the Soul is ſhackled to the walls of Fleſh, her ſoaring wings are imp'd, and all her enlivening faculties clogg'd, and fetter'd by the groſs particles of Matter, ſo that ſhe can neither freely range after, nor, when haply overtook, can quietly contemplate, her proper Object of Truth.

Farther, *Plato* defines Philoſophy to be the meditation of Death, becauſe the one performs the ſame office with the other, namely, withdraws the mind from all viſible, and corporeal objects; therefore while the Soul does patiently actuate the ſeveral organs, and members of the Body, ſo long is a man accounted of a good, and ſound

diſpoſition: but when the Soul, weary of her confinement, ſtruggles to break Jail, and flie beyond her cage of fleſh, and bloud, then a man is cenſured at leaſt for being maggoty, and crack-braind; nay, if there be any defect in the external organs, it is then termed down-right madneſs. And yet many times perſons thus affected ſhall have Prophetick Extaſies of foretelling things to come, ſhall in a Rapture talk languages they never before learned, and ſeem in all things actuated by ſomewhat Divine, and Extraordinary: And all This no doubt is only the effect of the Soul's being more releaſed from its engagement to the Body, whereby it can with leſs impediment exert the energy of Life, and Motion. From hence no queſtion has ſprung an obſervation of like nature, confirmed now into a ſettled Opinion, That *ſome long experienced Souls in the world, before their diſlodging, arrive to the height of Prophetick ſpirits.*

If this diſorder ariſe from an intemperance in Religion, and too high a ſtrain of Devotion, though it be of a ſomewhat differing ſort, yet it is ſo near a kin to the former, that a great part of mankind apprehend it as a meer Madneſs; eſpecially when perſons of that ſuperſtitious humour are ſo pragmatical, and ſingular, as to ſeparate, and live apart as it were from all the world beſide: So as they ſeem to have experienc'd what *Plato* dreams to have happened between ſome, who incloſed in a dark cave, did only ruminate on the Ideas, and

and Abſtracted ſpeculations of Entities; and one other of their company, who had got abroad into the open light, and at his return tells them, what a blind miſtake they had lain under; that he had ſeen the ſubſtance of what their dotage of imagination reach'd only in ſhadow; that therefore he could not but pity, and condole their deluding dreams, while they on the other ſide no leſs bewail his phrenſie, and turn him out of their ſociety for a Lunatick, and Madman.

Thus the vulgar are wholly taken up with thoſe objects that are moſt familiar to their ſenſes, beyond which they are apt to think All is but Fairy-land; while thoſe that are devoutly Religious, ſcorn to ſet their thoughts, or affections on any *things below*, but mount their ſoul to the purſuit of incorporeal, and inviſible Beings: The former, in their marſhalling the requiſites of Happineſs, place Riches in the front, the endowments of the Body in the next rank, and leave the accompliſhments of the Soul to bring up the rear; nay, ſome will ſcarce believe there is any ſuch thing at all as the *Soul*, becauſe they cannot literally ſee a reaſon of their faith; while the other pay their firſt-fruits of ſervice to that moſt ſimple, and imcomprehenſible Being, God, employ themſelves next in providing for the happineſs of that which comes neareſt to their immortal Soul, being not at all mindful of their corrupt bodily carcaſſes, and ſlighting money as the dirt, and rubbage of the world; Or if at any

time ſome urging occaſions require them to become intangled in ſecular affairs, they do it with regret, and a kind of ill will, obſerving what St. *Paul* adviſes his *Corinthians*, *Having wives, and yet being as though they had none, Buying, and yet remaining as though they poſſeſſed not.*

There are between theſe two ſorts of perſons many differences in ſeveral other reſpects. As firſt, though all the Senſes have the ſame mutual relation to the Body, yet ſome are more groſs than others, as thoſe five corporeal ones of Touching, Hearing, Smelling, Seeing, Taſting; whereas ſome again are more refined, and leſs adulterated with Matter, ſuch are the Memory, the Underſtanding, and the Will: Now the Mind will be alway moſt ready, and expedite at that, to which it is naturally moſt inclined. Hence is it, that a pious ſoul, imploying all its power and abilities in the preſſing after ſuch things, as are fartheſt removed from Senſe, is perfectly ſtupid, and brutiſh in the management of any worldly affairs; while on the other ſide the vulgar are ſo intent upon their buſineſs, and imployment, that they have not time to beſtow one poor thought upon a future Eternity. From ſuch ardour of Divine meditation was it that St. *Bernard* in his ſtudy drank Oyl inſtead of Wine, and yet his thoughts were ſo taken up, that he never obſerv'd the Miſtake.

Farther, among the Paſſions of the Soul, ſome

ſome have a greater communication with the Body than others, as Luſt, the deſire of meat and ſleep, Anger, Pride, and Envy; with theſe the Pious man is in continual war, and irreconcileable enmity, while the Vulgar cheriſh, and foment them, as the beſt comforts of Life.

There are other affections of a middle nature, common, and innate to every man; ſuch are Love to ones Country, Duty to Parents, Love to Children, Kindneſs to Friends, and ſuch like; to theſe the Vulgar pay ſome reſpect, but the Religious endeavour to ſupplant, and eradicate from their Soul, except they can raiſe, and ſublimate them to the moſt refined pitch of Virtue; ſo as to love, or honour their Parents, not barely under that character, (for what did they do more than generate a *Body*, nay even for that we are primarily beholden to God, the firſt Parent of all Mankind?) but as Good men only, upon whom is imprinted the lively image of that Divine nature, which they eſteem as the chief, and only *Good*, beyond whom nothing deſerves to be beloved, nothing deſired.

By the ſame Rule they meaſure all the other offices, or Duties of Life; in each of which, whatever is earthly, and corporeal, ſhall, if not wholly rejected, yet at leaſt be put behind what Faith makes *the ſubſtance of things not ſeen*. Thus in the Sacraments, and all other Acts of Religion, they make a difference between the outward appearance, or body of them, and the more inward Soul, or Spirit. As to inſtance,

ſtance, in Faſting, they think it very ineffectual to abſtain from fleſh, or debar themſelves of a meals meat, (which yet is all the vulgar underſtand by this duty) unleſs they likewiſe reſtrain their paſſions, ſubdue their anger, and mortifie their pride; that the Soul being thus diſingaged from the intanglement of the body, may have a better relliſh to Spiritual Objects, and take an Antepaſt of Heaven. Thus (ſay they) in the holy Euchariſt, though the outward Form and Ceremonies are not wholly to be deſpiſed, yet are theſe prejudicial, at leaſt unprofitable, if as bare Signs only they are not accompanied with the thing ſignified, which is *the body, and bloud of Chriſt*, whoſe death, till his ſecond coming, we are hereby to repreſent by the vanquiſhing, and burying our vile affections, that they may ariſe to a newneſs of Life, and be united firſt each to other, then all to Chriſt.

Theſe are the actions, and meditations of the truly pious perſon; while the Vulgar place all their Religion in crowding up cloſe to the Altar, in liſtning to the words of the Prieſt, and in being very circumſpect at the obſervance of each trifling Ceremony. Nor is it in ſuch caſes only as we have here given for Inſtances, but through his whole courſe of Life, that the Pious man, without any regard to the baſer materials of the body, ſpends himſelf wholly in a fix'd intentneſs upon Spiritual, inviſible, and eternal objects.

Now

Now ſince theſe perſons ſtand off, and keep at ſo wide a diſtance between themſelves, it is cuſtomary for them both to think each other mad: And were I to give my opinion to which of the two the name does moſt properly belong, I ſhould, I confeſs, adjudge it to the Religious; of the reaſonableneſs whereof you may be farther convinced, if I proceed to demonſtrate what I formerly hinted at, namely, that That ultimate happineſs, which Religion propoſes, is no other than ſome ſort of Madneſs.

Firſt therefore, *Plato* dreamt ſomewhat of this nature, when he tells us, that the *Madneſs of Lovers* was of all other diſpoſitions of the body moſt deſireable; for he who is once throughly ſmitten with this Paſſion, lives no longer within himſelf, but has removed his ſoul to the ſame place, where he has ſettled his affections, and looſes himſelf to find the object he ſo much dotes upon: This ſtraying now, and wandring of a ſoul from its own manſion, what is it better than a plain tranſport of Madneſs? What elſe can be the meaning of thoſe Proverbial phraſes, *Non eſt apud ſe*, He is not Himſelf; *Ad te redi*, Recover your ſelf, and *Sibi redditus eſt*, He is come again to Himſelf? And accordingly, as Love is more hot, and eager, ſo is the Madneſs thence enſuing more incurable, and yet more happy. Now what ſhall be that future happineſs of glorified Saints, which pious Souls here on Earth ſo earneſtly groan for, but only that the Spirit, as the more potent,

potent, and prevalent victor, ſhall over-maſter, and ſwallow up the body; and that the more eaſily, becauſe, while here below, the ſeveral members, by being mortified, and kept in ſubjection, were the better prepared for this ſeparating change: and afterward the Spirit it ſelf ſhall be loſt, and drown'd in the abyſs of Beatifick Viſion, ſo as the whole Man will be then perfectly beyond all its own bounds, and be no otherwiſe happy than as tranſported into Extaſie, and wonder it feels ſome unſpeakable influence from that Omnipotent Being, which makes all things completely bleſſed by aſſimilating them to its own likeneſs? Now although this happineſs be then only conſummated, when Souls at the general Reſurrection ſhall be re-united to their Bodies, and both be *cloathed with Immortality*. Yet becauſe a Religious life is but a continued meditation upon, and as it were a Tranſcript of the Joys of Heaven; therefore to ſuch perſons there is allowed ſome relliſh and foretaſt of that pleaſure *here*, which is to be their reward *hereafter*. And although This indeed be but a ſmall pittance of ſatisfaction, compared with that future, inexhauſtible fountain of Bleſſedneſs; yet does it abundantly overballance all worldly delights, were they all in conjunction ſet off to their beſt advantage, ſo great is the precedency of Spiritual things before Corporeal, of Inviſible before Material and Viſible. This is what the Apoſtle gives an eloquent deſcription of,

of, where he ſays by way of encouragement, That *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, nor hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive thoſe things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* This likewiſe is that *better part* which *Mary* choſe, which *ſhall not be taken from her*, but perfected, and completed by her *mortal putting on immortality.*

Now thoſe who are thus devoutly affected, (though few there are ſo) undergo ſomewhat of ſtrange alteration, which very nearly approaches to Madneſs: They ſpeak many things at an abrupt, and incoherent rate, as if they were actuated by ſome poſſeſſing *Dæmon*; they make an inarticulate noiſe, without any diſtinguiſhable ſenſe, or meaning; they ſometimes skrew, and diſtort their faces to uncouth, and antick looks; at one time beyond meaſure chearful, then as immoderately ſullen; now ſobbing, then laughing, and ſoon after ſighing, as if they were perfectly diſtracted, and out of their ſenſes. If they have any ſober intervals of coming to themſelves again, like St. *Paul* they then confeſs, that *they were caught up they know not where, whether in the body, or out of the body, they cannot tell*; as if they had been in a dead ſleep, or trance, they remember nothing of what they have heard, ſeen, ſaid, or done: This they only know, that their paſt deluſion was a moſt deſirable happineſs; that therefore they bewail nothing more than the loſs of it, nor wiſh for any greater joy than

the quick return of it, and more durable abode for ever: and this (as I have said) is the foretaste, or anticipation of future Blessedness

But, I doubt, I have forgot my self, and have already transgress'd the bounds of modesty. However, if I have said any thing too confidently, or impertinently, be pleased to consider, that it was spoke by *Folly*, and that under the person of a *Woman*; yet at the same time remember the applicableness of that Greek Proverb,

Πολλάκι τοι καὶ μωρὸς ἀνὴρ καταιδέσιον εἶπεν,

A Fool oft speaks a seasonable Truth:

Unless you will be so witty as to object, that this makes no Apology for Me, because the word Ἀνὴρ, signifies a *Man*, not a *Woman*, and consequently my Sex debars me from the benefit of that observation.

I perceive now, that, for a concluding Treat, you expect a formal *Epilogue*, and the summing up of all in a brief recitation; but I'le assure you, you are grosly mistaken, if you suppose, that after such a Hodg-podg medley of Speech, I should be able to recollect any thing I have delivered. Beside, as it is an old Proverb, Μισῶ μνήμονα συμπόταν. *I hate a Pot-companion with a good memory*, so indeed I may as truly say, Μισῶ μνήμονα ἀκροατήν, *I hate a hearer, that will carry any*

any thing away with him. Wherefore, in short, Farewell; Be Jolly, Live long, Drink deep, ye moſt Illuſtrious Votaries of *FOLLY.*

FINIS.